

**Contact: Kelsey Rhoney (312-729- 3685)**

**CAMPO VERDE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE ARIZONA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 12, 2018) — In its 33<sup>rd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Rylan Stubbs of Campo Verde High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Arizona Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Stubbs is the first Gatorade Arizona Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Campo Verde High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Stubbs as Arizona's best high school boys cross country runner. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year award to be announced in January, Stubbs joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Lukas Verzbicas (2010-11, 2009-10 Carl Sandburg, Orland Park, Ill.), Megan Goethals (2009-10, Rochester, Rochester Hills, Mich.), Jordan Hasay (2008-09, Mission College Prep., San Luis Obispo, Calif.), Donn Cabral (2007-08, Glastonbury High School, Glastonbury, Conn.) and Chris Derrick (2007-08, Neuqua Valley, Naperville, Ill.).

The 6-foot-1, 150-pound junior raced to the Division 2 individual state championship this past season with a time of 15:54, leading the Coyotes to a second-place finish as a team. Stubbs also broke the tape at the Gilbert City Championship, the Chandler Invitational, the Sectional championships and the Titan Invitational. He placed seventh at the Woodbridge Classic and was 46th at the Nike Cross Nationals Southwest Regional championships.

A devoted member of his church youth group, Stubbs has volunteered locally on behalf of Feed My Starving Children. "Rylan goes to every length possible to get the very best from himself," said Campo Verde coach Josh Applebach. "His attention to detail is one of the keys to his success. He goes the extra mile to squeeze every drop of potential from his ocean of talent."

Stubbs has maintained a 3.21 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his senior season of high school this fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Stubbs joins Gatorade Arizona Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Manuel Olivo-Quinones (2016-17, Buena High School), D. J. Harris (2015-16, Desert Vista High School), Carlos Villarreal (2014-15, Rio Rico High School), Nathan Rodriguez (2013-14, Corona del Sol High School), Bernie Montoya (2012-13 & 2011-12, Cibola High School), Billy Orman (2010-11, Tuba City High School), Brian Shrader (2009-10 & 2008-09, Sinagua), and Jim Walmsley (2007-08, Horizon) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Stubbs will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow the conversation on Twitter #GatoradePOY. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit <http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com/>.

###