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**FAYETTEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE ARKANSAS 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 Camren Fischer of Fayetteville High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Arkansas Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Fischer is the first Gatorade Arkansas Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Fayetteville 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 Fischer as Arkansas'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, Fischer 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 state's returning Gatorade Runner of the Year, the 5-foot-10, 137-pound junior won the Class 7A state meet for a second straight season this past fall with a time of 15:44.3, breaking the tape 25.8 seconds ahead of his next-closest competitor and leading the Bulldogs to a second-place finish as a team. Fischer qualified for both the Nike Cross Nationals Final and the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships. A two-time Arkansas Activities Association Runner of the Year, he is a three-time Class 7A First Team All-State honoree.

Fischer served as part of a mission trip to Mexico where he worked in a school and helped build houses. He has volunteered locally with the Special Olympics and on behalf of multiple community service initiatives through his church. "Camren Fischer is one of the best distance runners to ever come out of the state of Arkansas," said Randy Ramaker, head coach of Bentonville High. "He is very strong and runs many races alone out front."

Fischer has maintained a weighted 3.84 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his senior year 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.

Two-time winner Fischer joins Gatorade Arkansas Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year T.J. Sugg (2015-16 & 2014-15, Har-Ber High School), Jacob Shiohira (2013-14 & 2012-13, Bentonville High School), Will Aenchbacher (2011-12, Bentonville High School), Christian Heymsfield (2010-11, Elkins High School), Christopher Marchman (2009-10, Sheridan), Cameron Efurd (2008-09, Rogers), and Aaron Hamilton (2007-08, Rogers) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Fischer 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/>.

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