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**REDWOOD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE CALIFORNIA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 12, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Liam Anderson of Redwood High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade California Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Anderson is the first Gatorade California Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Redwood 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 Anderson as California'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, Anderson 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 5-foot-7, 130-pound junior raced to the Division 3 individual state championship this past season with a time of 15:10.3. Anderson took third in the country at the Nike Cross Nationals Final, earning First Team All-American status with a time of 15:07.6. He also won the Marin County Athletic League championships and the North Coast Meet of Champions, while finishing second at the prestigious Mt. SAC Invitational and the Clovis Invitational.

A certified Wilderness First Responder and a member of the Marin County Search and Rescue team, Anderson has helped develop a program that pairs autistic children with local runners. "His third-place finish at the NXN Final was a result of three years of disciplined work and perfect race execution," said Redwood coach Laura Schmitt. "I knew when I met him before his freshman year that he was going to be a leader and a team-changer for Redwood. He possesses maturity beyond his years and demonstrates all the qualities of a champion."

Anderson has maintained a 4.08 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.

Anderson joins Gatorade California Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Callum Bolger (2016-17, San Luis Obispo High School), Phillip Rocha (2015-16, Arcadia High School), Austin Tamagno (2014-15, Brea Olinda High School), Blake Haney (2013-14, Stockdale High School), Bryan Fernandez (2012-13, Dos Pueblos High School), Darren Fahy (2011-12, La Costa Canyon High School), Ammar Moussa (2010-11 & 2009-10, Arcadia High School), Chris Schwartz (2008-09, Foothill), and German Fernandez (2007-08, Riverbank) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Anderson 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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