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**REITZ MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE INDIANA 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 Matthew Schadler of Reitz Memorial High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Indiana Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Schadler is the first Gatorade Indiana Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Reitz Memorial 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 Schadler as Indiana'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, Schadler 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-11, 142-pound senior raced to an eighth-place finish at the Foot Locker Midwest Regional championships this past season with a time of 15:08.8. Schadler was also the top Indiana runner at the Nike Cross Nationals Midwest Regional championships, crossing the line 11th, and he took 26th at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships. He earned victories at the Sectional championships, the Warrior Invitational and the Kentucky-Indiana Border Clash, while placing fourth at the state championship meet with a time of 15:29.

An Eagle Scout with the Boy Scouts of America and president of his chapter of the 4-H Club, Schadler organized a mission trip to Guatemala to build a home for a family in need. "Matthew's hard work and dedication to his training has paid off for his team and himself," said Reitz Memorial coach Mark Schuler. "As the lone senior on our team, he's been an excellent role model and provided the steadiness a program needs with nine sophomores and six freshmen."

Schadler has maintained a 3.60 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in cross country and track and field on scholarship at Indiana University 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.

Schadler joins Gatorade Indiana Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Curtis Eckstein (2016-17, Oldenburg Academy), Ben Veatch (2015-16 & 2014-15, Carmel High School), Jackson Bertoli (2013-14, Terre Haute South Vigo High School), Connor Sorrells (2012-13, Barr-Reeve High School), Futsum Zeinasellassie (2011-12 & 2010-11, North Central High School), Tyler Byrne (2009-10, North Harrison), Drew Shields (2008-09, Fishers), and Mike Fout (2007-08, LaPorte) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Schadler 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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