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**CENTURY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NORTH DAKOTA 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 Evan Saylor of Century High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade North Dakota Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Saylor is the second Gatorade North Dakota Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Century 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 Saylor as North Dakota'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, Saylor 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-8, 140-pound senior raced to the Class A individual state championship this past season with a time of 15:42, leading the Patriots to the state title as a team. Saylor also broke the tape at the Western Dakota Association championships, the Anderson/Stavn Invitational and the Rusty Bucket Invitational. He placed seventh at the Nike Cross Nationals Heartland Regional championships.

President of the Student Council and a talented musician, Saylor has volunteered locally on behalf of Students Against Destructive Decisions. "Evan is very dedicated to his studies and his training, which has made him into one of the best runners in school history and the Heartland region," said Century coach Brad Lies. "It's been an honor and a privilege coaching him the last four years."

Saylor has maintained a 3.96 GPA in the classroom. He remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

Saylor joins Gatorade North Dakota Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Hunter Lucas (2016-17, Davies High School), Sam Clausnitzer (2015-16 & 2014-15, Bismarck High School), Matt Gotta (2013-14, Bismarck High School), Jake Leingang (2012-13, 2011-12 & 2010-11, Bismarck High School), Brett Kelly (2009-10, Century High School) and Joash Osoro (2008-09 & 2007-08, Bismarck High School) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Saylor 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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