

CONCORD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NEW HAMPSHIRE BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (February 11, 2019) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Forest MacKenzie of Concord High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade New Hampshire Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year**. MacKenzie is the first Gatorade New Hampshire Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Concord 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 MacKenzie as New Hampshire'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 February, MacKenzie joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Lukas Verzbicas (2010-11, 2009-10 Carl Sandburg, Orland Park High School, Ill.), Donn Cabral (2007-08, Glastonbury High School, Glastonbury, Conn.) and Chris Derrick (2007-08, Neuqua Valley High School, Naperville, Ill.).

The state's returning Gatorade Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year, the 5-foot-8, 140-pound senior won the Meet of Champions individual all-state title this past season, breaking the tape with a time of 15:48.00 and leading the Crimson Tide to the team title. The Concord Monitor Athlete of the Season, MacKenzie also repeated as Division 1 state champion with a time of 15:52.20 to become the first Concord runner in history to sweep the divisional and MOC crowns. He was the state's top finisher at both the New England High School XC Championships (7th—16:12.60) and the Nike Cross Nationals Northeast Regional championships (20th—16:30.20). MacKenzie's winning time of 15:35.40 set a Nashua North Invitational record, and he wrapped up his regular season by defending his Capital Area Cross Country Championship title in a course-record time of 15:56.00.

An invited member of the NHIAA Student Leadership Conference, MacKenzie is active in his school's Varsity Club, serving as emcee of Tide pep rallies, and hosts Concord's daily morning announcements, "CHS Live." He has participated in multiple community service initiatives in association with the National Honor Society. "Repeating as state champion after Concord hadn't produced an individual winner since 1963, leading his team to the MOC title and being the first New Hampshire runner to cross the line at New Englands certainly qualifies MacKenzie to win Gatorade ROY honors for a second consecutive year," said Erik Boal, editor for DyeStat.

MacKenzie has maintained a 92.9 average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in cross country and track and field on scholarship at the University of New Hampshire 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. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Two-time winner MacKenzie joins Gatorade New Hampshire Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Patrick O'Brien (2016-17, Oyster River High School), Cameron Daly (2015-16, Inter-Lakes High School), Eli Moskowitz (2014-15, Souhegan High School), and Jeremy Brassard (2013-14, Coe-Brown Northwood Academy) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," MacKenzie has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of his choosing. He is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit www.Gatorade.com/POY, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

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