

## CARY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NORTH CAROLINA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR

**CHICAGO** (February 11, 2019) — In its 34<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Anton Idhammar of Cary High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade North Carolina Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year**. Idhammar is the second Gatorade North Carolina Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Cary 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 Idhammar as North Carolina'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, Idhammar 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 5-foot-11, 155-pound senior won the Class 4A individual state championship this past season, breaking the tape with a time of 15:45.12 and leading the Imps to the state team title. A First Team All-State selection as named by NC Milesplit, he clocked a personal-best for 5K with his third-place finish at the NCHSAA 4A Mideast Regional in 15:24.61. He also ran the state's best 3200-meter time of the fall campaign, crossing the line fifth in 9:14.71 at November's Hoka One One Postal Nationals—Dash for Doobie.

A member of Cary High's Student Council, Model UN Club and Environmental Club, he is an officer in the National Honor Society and, in that capacity, has participated in multiple community service initiatives. Idhammar has also spent the past two summers mentoring at-risk and underserved teens at Colorado's Aspen Youth Center, in addition to teaching in the all-day summer program's STEM initiative. He has completed an internship with the City of Aspen engineering department as well. "Anton has great range as a distance runner, as evidenced by his state championship in cross country and his outstanding times in track and field," said Apex High head coach Roy Cooper. "What sets him apart, however, is his dedication to excellence in not only his individual events, but to team results as well. His performance in cross country was fueled in large part by his desire to help his team win a state championship, which they did. He is the consummate competitor and teammate."

Idhammar has maintained a weighted 4.56 GPA in the classroom. He will attend the University of Pennsylvania this fall, where he will compete in both cross country and track and field.

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.

Idhammar joins Gatorade North Carolina Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year John Tatter (2017-18, R.J. Reynolds High School), Connor Lane (2016-17, Cardinal Gibbons High School), Jeremy Brown (2015-16 & 2014-15, Broughton High School), and Ben Huffman (2013-14, Providence Day School) 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," Idhammar 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](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](https://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

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