

**VALOR CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE COLORADO BOYS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 24, 2019) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Cole Sprout of Valor Christian High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Colorado Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year**. Sprout is the second Gatorade Colorado Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Valor Christian 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 track, distinguishes Sprout as Colorado's best high school boys track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Sprout joins an elite alumni association of state track & field award-winners, including Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt High School, Iowa), Allyson Felix (2002-03, Los Angeles Baptist High School, Calif.), Robert Griffin III (2006-07, Copperas Cove High School, Texas), Grant Fisher (2013-14 & 2014-15, Grand Blanc High School, Mich.) and Candace Hill (2014-15, Rockdale County High School, Ga.).

The 5-foot-8, 125-pound junior won the 1600-meter run with a time of 4:13.78 and the 3200-meter run in 9:11.84 at Class 5A state meet this past season, leading the Eagles to the state championship as a team. The state's Gatorade Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year last fall, Sprout won the two-mile at the Brooks PR Invitational in 8:46.41, which ranked as the nation's No. 1 performance among prep competitors in 2019 at the time of his selection.

Sprout has volunteered locally on behalf of a soup kitchen as well as Operation Christmas Child, and has participated in a service-mission trip to Ethiopia. "Cole is a relentless competitor," said Valor Christian High School coach Brian Kula. "He's a frontrunner who sets huge goals for himself, but he has amazing control of his emotions and manages high-level running and academics with humility."

Sprout has maintained a 3.98 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. 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 Sprout joins Gatorade Colorado Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Isaac Green (2016-17, Monarch High School), Caleb Ojennes (2015-16, Palmer Ridge High School), Blake Yount (2014-15, Smoky Hill High School) and Kevin McClanahan (2013-14, Erie High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Sprout also 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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