

GREER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE SOUTH CAROLINA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (February 10, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Coen Roberts of Greer High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade South Carolina Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Roberts is the first Gatorade South Carolina Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Greer 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 Roberts as South 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, Roberts joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Lukas Verzbicas (2010-11, 2009-10 Carl Sandburg High School, Orland Park, Ill.), Megan Goethals (2009-10, Rochester High School, Rochester Hills, Mich.), Jordan Hasay (2008-09, Mission College Preparatory Catholic High School, San Luis Obispo, Calif.) and Chris Derrick (2007-08, Neuqua Valley High School, Naperville, Ill.).

The 6-foot-2, 150-pound senior raced to the Class 4A individual state championship this past season with a time of 15:04.56, leading the Yellow Jackets to the state title as a team. Roberts finished second at the Foot Locker South Regional championships in 14:59. He also won at the Hare & Hounds Invitational, the Eye Opener Invitational and the Bob Jenkins Coaches Classic in 2019.

Roberts has volunteered locally on behalf of a soup kitchen and youth track programs. "Coen Roberts was absolutely the best runner in the state this year," said Scott Lucking, head coach at Hilton Head High. "He was really good when he was young and he's made a steady progression. He gets better and better every year, but he never shines any attention on himself."

Roberts has maintained a 3.97 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in cross country and track and field on scholarship at Wake Forest 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 and 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.

Roberts joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year Colin Baker (2018-19, Academic Magnet High School), Wynn Johnson (2017-18, Dorman High School), John Ward (2016-17, Wade Hampton High School), Jackson Ellenburg (2015-16, Ashley Ridge High School) and Micah Williams (2014-15, Greer Middle College Charter High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Roberts 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.