

**LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE SOUTH DAKOTA 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 Andrew Lauer of Lincoln High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade South Dakota Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Lauer is the third Gatorade South Dakota Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Lincoln 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 Lauer as South 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 February, Lauer 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 5-foot-10, 130-pound senior won the Division AA state meet this past season with a time of 15:42.60, breaking the tape 15.49 seconds ahead of his next-closest competitor and lead the Patriots to a first-place finish as a team. Lauer took fourth at the prestigious Roy Griak Invitational in Minnesota and earned All-Regional honors by finishing seventh at the Nike Cross Nationals Heartland Regional championships in 15:22.2.

Lauer's older brother Will, was the state's 2014-15 Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. A member of his school's Jazz Band, he has volunteered locally on behalf of multiple community service initiatives through his school's SALSA (Serve and Learn Student Association) club. "Andrew demonstrated he was the best cross country runner in South Dakota at every meet this season," said Shane Reilly, head coach of Washington High. "Andrew's discipline and work ethic led him to strong performances throughout the season."

Lauer has maintained a weighted 4.16 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run cross country on scholarship at the University of North Carolina 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.

Lauer joins recent Gatorade South Dakota Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year Aaron Ryan (2018-19, Aberdeen Central High School), Derick Peters (2017-18 & 2016-17, West Central High School), Gabe Peters (2015-16, Lincoln High School) and Will Lauer (2014-15, Lincoln High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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