

BLUE VALLEY SOUTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE KANSAS BOYS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (February 13, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Alex Roberts of Blue Valley Southwest High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Kansas Boys Cross Country Player of the Year.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation's best high school athletes for their excellence in sport, academics and community. The award recognizes Roberts as Kansas' best high school boys cross country athlete, and he joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Lukas Verzbicas (2009-10 & 2010-11, Carl Sandburg High School, IL) Edward Cheserek (2012-13, Saint Benedict's Preparatory School, NJ) and Charlie Vause (2024-25, Rio Rancho High School, NM).

The 6-foot-2, 155-pound senior was the state's top finisher at both the Nike Cross Regionals and Brooks Cross Country Regionals postseason meets, earning First Team All-Region honors in each with seventh- and fifth-place finishes, respectively. Roberts took second at the KSHSAA Class 5A state meet, leading the Timberwolves to a second place team as a team. A three-time All-State selection, he became just the third Kansas runner to qualify for national Brooks (formerly Foot Locker) Cross Country Championships in the past 25 years.

A member of the National Honor Society, Roberts has volunteered more than 200 hours locally supporting food drives and harvesters' services in addition to serving as a camp counselor. Through his involvement with Math National Honor Society, he has also donated his time as a math tutor and by helping to organize the club's competitions. "Alex Roberts certainly broke through as the state's premier talent this past season, posting superb showings at major in-season invitationals as well as challenges beyond state lines," said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. "Punching his ticket to the Brooks nationals meet and landing just one spot short of advancing to Nike Cross Nationals, he was one of just three athletes in the entire Midwest Region to earn Top 10 finishes at both regional championship meets."

Roberts has maintained a weighted 4.09 GPA in the classroom. He remains undecided upon a college destination.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one state winner from each of the 50 states and Washington D.C., in 12 different sports: football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, baseball, softball, boys and girls soccer, and boys and girls track & field. In total, 610 high school athletes are honored each year. From the pool of state winners, one national winner is selected in each of the 12 sports. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the winners in each sport.

As part of Gatorade's commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$6.4 million in grants to winners across more than 2,200 organizations.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit playeroftheyear.gatorade.com or follow us on social media on Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade, Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY and X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.

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