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**CORONA DEL SOL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE ARIZONA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 16, 2014) — In its 29th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Nathan Rodriguez of Corona del Sol High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Arizona Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Rodriguez is the first Gatorade Arizona Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Corona del Sol 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 racecourse, distinguishes Rodriguez as Arizona'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 January, Rodriguez joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Ryan Hall (1999-00, 2000-01, Big Bear HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Kevin Garnett (1992-93, Maudlin HS, S.C.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-10, 140-pound senior raced to the Division 1 individual state championship this past season with a time of 15:29.98, leading the Aztecs to the state title as a team. Rodriguez also earned victories at the Desert Twilight Festival, the Sole Sports Running Zone Festival, the Chandler Invitational, the Sectional Championships and the Tempe City Championships. He finished 11th at the Nike Cross Nationals Southwest Regional championships.

Rodriguez has maintained a 3.03 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of community road races and youth running programs.

"Nathan is very dedicated and willing to do everything it takes to perform his best," said Corona del Sol coach Pat Smith. "More importantly, he values his teammates and always puts them first."

Rodriguez has verbally committed to an athletic scholarship at Iowa State University beginning 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. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Rodriguez joins Gatorade Arizona Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Bernie Montoya (2012-13 & 2011-12, Cibola High School), Billy Orman (2010-11, Tuba City High School), Brian Shrader (2009-10 & 2008-09, Sinagua), and Jim Walmsley (2007-08, Horizon) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit www.gatorade.com/poy.

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