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**BLUE VALLEY WEST HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE KANSAS 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 Stuart McNutt of Blue Valley West High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Kansas Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. McNutt is the second Gatorade Kansas Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Blue Valley West 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 McNutt as Kansas'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, McNutt 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 junior distance runner raced to the Class 6A individual state championship with a time of 15:33.30 this past season, leading the Jaguars to fifth place as a team. The All-Metro Runner of the Year as named by The Kansas City Star, McNutt captured third place at the Nike Cross Nationals Heartland Regional championships in 15:13.80, and then placed 25th at the NXN Final in 15:30. He also won the Coaches National Youth Cross Country Championships' 17-18 division in 15:17.68.

McNutt has maintained a 3.89 weighted GPA in the classroom. In addition to donating his time as a youth running instructor, he has volunteered as a peer tutor and on behalf of his church, the United Way and the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life.

"Stuart's will and desire separated him from his opponents," said Blue Valley West head coach Mike Webb. "When he could have coasted into the regional and state championships by just running an average time, he ran faster than ever and broke the coveted 15-minute barrier at the league championships. He broke his own school record four times this season."

McNutt 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. 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.

McNutt joins Gatorade Kansas Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Colton Donahue (2012-13, Blue Valley High School), Jacob Morgan (2011-12, Washburn Rural High School), Evan Landes (2010-11, Mulvane High School), Roy Wedge (2009-10, Lawrence), PJ Greer (2008-09, Saint Thomas Aquinas), and Bryce Volz (2007-08, Bishop Carroll Catholic) 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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