

Contact: Jason Belenke (312-729-3631)

**SKY VIEW HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE UTAH 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 Conner Mantz of Sky View High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Utah Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Mantz is the first Gatorade Utah Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Sky View 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 Mantz as Utah'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, Mantz 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-8, 120-pound junior raced to seventh place nationally at the Foot Locker Cross Country Championships this past season, with a time of 15:23. Mantz also won the Class 4A individual state championship in 15:11.5. He was second at the Nike Cross Nationals Southwest Regional championships in 15:22.78 and took fourth at the Foot Locker Midwest Regional championships with a time of 15:42.6.

Mantz has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. Also a talented musician, Mantz has participated in numerous community service initiatives as an Eagle Scout with the Boys Scouts of America.

"Conner has great character, great work ethic and is a great leader," said Sky View coach Kyle Wright. "He maintains a year-round regimen of running and racing, and he's inspired his teammates to work hard through his actions and words."

Mantz 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.

Mantz joins Gatorade Utah Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Ben Saarel (2012-13, Park City High School), Clayton Young (2011-12 & 2010-11, American Fork High School), Austin West (2009-10, American Fork), Jonathan Nelson (2008-09, Timpview), and Luke Puskedra (2007-08, Judge Memorial 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.

###