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POCATELLO HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED GATORADE IDAHO BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (January 15, 2015) — In its 30th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Elijah Armstrong of Pocatello High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Idaho Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Armstrong is the first Gatorade Idaho Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Pocatello 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 Armstrong as Idaho'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, Armstrong 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-5, 140-pound senior raced to a third-place finish at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships this past season with a time of 15:13. Armstrong also won the Foot Locker West Regional championships, breaking the tape in 15:24.2, and earned third-place at the Nike Cross Nationals Northwest Regional championships in 16:28.3. The state's two-time returning Gatorade Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year, he became the first prep runner in state history to capture four consecutive Class 4A individual state championships, clocking a 15:25.4 and leading the Indians to a state title as a team.

Armstrong has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society and a devoted parishioner in his church community, he has volunteered locally on behalf of multiple school fundraisers and as a youth track & field coach.

"Elijah Armstrong is an amazing student athlete and his work ethic and drive to succeed is unprecedented," said Pocatello High head coach Shannon Whitmer. "What he has accomplished at Pocatello High School during the past four years is something that has never been done before. It has been a pleasure to be a part of his remarkable journey and I am very excited to see what his future brings."

Armstrong has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on an athletic scholarship at Boise 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.

Three-time winner Armstrong joins Gatorade Idaho Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Dallin Farnsworth (2011-12 & 2010-11, Highland High School), Cody Helbling (2009-10, Lake City), Barak Watson (2008-09, Columbia), and Eric Fitzpatrick (2007-08, Boise) 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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