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CARMEL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED GATORADE INDIANA 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 Ben Veatch of Carmel High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Indiana Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Veatch is the first Gatorade Indiana Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Carmel 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 Veatch as Indiana'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, Veatch 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-11, 135-pound junior raced to the individual state championship this past season with a time of 15:09.3, leading the Greyhounds to second place as a team. Veatch is one of just four prep boys nationwide to earn All-American honors at both national title races, placing seventh at the Nike Cross Nationals Final in 15:28 and 14th at the Foot Locker Cross Country Championships. He also earned a third-place finish at the NXN Midwest Regional championships and took fifth at the Foot Locker Midwest Regional championships.

Veatch has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of a nursing home and a soup kitchen.

"Ben is a team-first superstar who has been an important part of the varsity since early in his freshman year," said Carmel coach Colin Altevogt. "He's a tireless worker and a fierce competitor, but he's incredibly invested in the success of his teammates too."

Veatch 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.

Veatch joins Gatorade Indiana Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Jackson Bertoli (2013-14, Terre Haute South Vigo High School), Connor Sorrells (2012-13, Barr-Reeve High School), Futsum Zeinasellassie (2011-12 & 2010-11, North Central High School), Tyler Byrne (2009-10, North Harrison), Drew Shields (2008-09, Fishers), and Mike Fout (2007-08, LaPorte) 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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