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## **WAYZATA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED GATORADE MINNESOTA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 15, 2015) — In its 30<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Connor Olson of Wayzata High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Minnesota Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Olson is the second Gatorade Minnesota Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Wayzata 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 Olson as Minnesota'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, Olson 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, 145-pound senior raced to the Class AA individual state championship this past season with a time of 15:17.1, leading the Trojans to a state title as a team. The state's returning Gatorade Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year, Olson took seventh place at the Nike Cross Nationals Heartland Regional championships, crossing the line in 15:18.2. He went on to compete at the NXN Final where he finished 12th in 15:39, earning All-American honors.

Olson has maintained an A-minus average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of multiple charity road races in addition to donating his time building and maintaining woodchip walking and running trails in his community.

"Connor Olson is a thoughtful young man," said Wayzata High head coach Bill Miles. "He puts his team first and leads them by example and with words. He respects his sport, his talent, his teammates and his opponents. His commitment to excellence is obvious and carries over to the classroom, the workplace, and his community."

Olson has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on an athletic scholarship at the University of Minnesota 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.

Two-time winner Olson joins Gatorade Minnesota Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Matt Welch (2012-13, Proctor High School), Josh Thorson (2011-12, Wayzata High School), Adam Zutz (2010-11, St. Francis High School), Aaron Bartnik (2009-10, Eden Prairie), Lukas Gemar (2008-09, Moorhead), and Jordan Carlson (2007-08, Rosemount) 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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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