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**UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE WEST VIRGINIA 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 Seth Edwards of University High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade West Virginia Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Edwards is the first Gatorade West Virginia Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from University 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 Edwards as West Virginia'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, Edwards 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-7, 120-pound junior raced to the Class AAA state championship this past season with a time of 16:15.7, leading the Hawks to a state title as a team. A 2014 First Team All-State selection, Edwards also won the AAA Region I championship, breaking the tape in 16:58.5.

Edwards has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of Ruby Memorial Hospital and as a special education teaching assistant in addition to completing a service-mission trip to Nicaragua.

"I have personally witnessed Seth Edwards' strong athletic ability in addition to his outstanding character on and off the cross country course," said Jason Henley, head coach at Hurricane High. "Over the past three seasons, Edwards has steadily ascended to one of the best cross country runners in the state of West Virginia. With all of his success, what strikes me the most is his humility. He is one of the nicest kids you will ever meet. He is very respectful of and outgoing to rival coaches and athletes."

Edwards 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.

Edwards joins Gatorade West Virginia Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Matthew Brafford (2013-14, George Washington High School), Jacob Burcham (2012-13, 2011-12 & 2010-11, Cabell Midland High School), Cody Pelliccioni (2009-10 & 2008-09, Morgantown), and Ryan Beabout (2007-08, Wheeling Park) 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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