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**CARMEL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE INDIANA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 22, 2016) — In its 31<sup>st</sup> 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 2015-16 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 senior raced to his second consecutive individual state championship this past season with a time of 14:59, leading the Greyhounds to the state title as a team. The state's returning Gatorade Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year, Veatch placed second at the Nike Cross Nationals Final in 15:04.8 and third at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships in 15:09.6. He was one of only six runners in the country to compete in both national title races, earning All-American honors in each. He also earned a second-place finish at the NXN Midwest Regional championships and took third at the Foot Locker Midwest Regional championships.

Veatch has maintained a 4.12 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of a nursing home, youth running programs and the Children's Museum of Indianapolis.

"Ben will go down as the best distance runner in school history, but he's beloved by his teammates and respected by his competitors," said Carmel coach Colin Altevogt. "His leadership has catapulted our teams to great success in both the fall and spring seasons."

Veatch has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on an athletic scholarship at Indiana 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.

Two-time winner 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 High School), Drew Shields (2008-09, Fishers High School), and Mike Fout (2007-08, LaPorte High School) 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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