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DOWLING CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED GATORADE IOWA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (January 22, 2016) — In its 31st year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Ryan Schweizer of Dowling Catholic High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Iowa Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Schweizer is the second Gatorade Iowa Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Dowling Catholic 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 Schweizer as Iowa'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, Schweizer 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 6-foot-1, 160-pound senior won the Class 4A state meet this past season with a time of 15:45.3 to lead the Maroons to the state title. Schweizer was undefeated against in-state competition and placed 25th at the Nike Cross Nationals Heartland Regional championships.

Schweizer has maintained a 3.78 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally as a youth camp counselor and swim instructor, and he has donated his time to the Best Buddies program.

"In my many years of coaching, Ryan has some of the best pure speed that I have ever seen from a distance runner," said Tom Trygstad, head coach of Valley High. "His ability to close and finish strong can strike fear in all competitors."

Schweizer remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

Schweizer joins Gatorade Iowa Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Thomas Pollard (2014-15 & 2013-14, Gilbert High School), Jason Thomas (2012-13, Dowling Catholic High School), Ben Anderson (2011-12, Valley High School), Marshall Moyer (2010-11 & 2009-10, Burlington High School), Lewi Manirumva (2008-09, Washington High School), and Devin Allbaugh (2007-08, Pleasant Valley 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.

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