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**WAYZATA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE MINNESOTA 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 Jaret Carpenter of Wayzata High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Minnesota Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Carpenter is the third 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 Carpenter 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, Carpenter 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-8, 120-pound senior raced to a fourth-place finish at the Nike Cross Nationals Final this past season with a time of 15:09.7. Carpenter qualified for nationals by winning the NXN Heartland Regional championships, breaking the tape in 14:58.8. A three-time First Team All-State selection, he also won the Class AA individual state title with a time of 15:26.5.

Carpenter has maintained an 11.4 GPA on a 12-point scale (A-minus average) in the classroom. An accomplished guitarist, he has worked part-time at an area retail store and volunteered locally on behalf of his church youth group.

"Jaret Carpenter is a top-notch teammate and leader who always does things in the right way," said Wayzata head coach Mark Popp. "Despite his phenomenal individual success, he has always remained humble and maintained a team-first attitude. Without question, he is one of the best young men to ever come through our program."

Carpenter 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.

Carpenter joins Gatorade Minnesota Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Connor Olson (2014-15 & 2013-14, Wayzata High School), 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 High School), Lukas Gemar (2008-09, Moorhead High School), and Jordan Carlson (2007-08, Rosemount 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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