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**HELENA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MONTANA 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 Aidan Reed of Helena High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Montana Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Reed is the first Gatorade Montana Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Helena 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 Reed as Montana'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, Reed 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 took second at the Class AA individual state meet this past season with a time of 14:57.1, leading the Bengals to a sixth-place finish as a team. The state's returning Gatorade Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year, Reed got stronger throughout the postseason, finishing ninth at the Nike Cross Nationals Northwest Regional championships, crossing the line in 15:49.3. He also finished 13th at the highly competitive Foot Locker West Regional championships, clocking a 16:05.1.

Reed has maintained a 3.88 GPA in the classroom. A contributor to the student newspaper and a participant in the Montana Model United Nations, he has served as president of his school's student government in addition to volunteering as part of an anti-drug campaign and on behalf of the Montana Historical Society.

"What sets Aidan apart from the rest of the competition in Montana is his ability to focus and self-motivate to be the best he can be," said Helena High head coach Kelley Gilbert. "Training is a year-round thing for him. He has led our team since day one of his freshman year."

Reed has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on an athletic scholarship at Southern Utah 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 Reed joins Gatorade Montana Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Jason Holmes (2013-14, Bozeman High School), Zach Perrin (2012-13, Flathead High School), Jakob Woodland (2011-12, Bozeman High School), Jacob Turner (2010-11, Sentinel High School), Mike Asay (2009-10, Manhattan High School), Drew Coco (2008-09, Whitefish High School), and Patrick Casey (2007-08, Laurel 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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