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**FAITH LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE NEVADA 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 Chase Wood of Faith Lutheran High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Nevada Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Wood is the first Gatorade Nevada Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Faith Lutheran 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 Wood as Nevada'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, Wood 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-3, 150-pound senior raced to the Division 1A individual state championship this past season with a time of 16:46. Wood also won the UNLV Invitational, the Lake Mead Invitational, the Peaks Invitational and the Southern Division finals.

Wood has maintained a 4.17 GPA in the classroom. A devoted member of his church community, he has served as a youth minister and has raised funds to benefit underprivileged runners.

"Chase is confident, yet he values feedback and uses it to better himself every day," said Faith Lutheran coach Jeff Edwards. "He always recognizes and appreciates his teammates and fellow competitors too. He's the first one to head back to the finish line and cheer on every single runner that crosses. I'm looking forward to his upcoming track season and I will be sad to see him go."

Wood 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.

Wood joins Gatorade Nevada Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year DaJour Braxton (2014-15, Centennial High School), Kai Benedict (2013-14, McQueen High School), Jordan Cardenas (2012-13, Reno High School), Nick Hartle (2011-12 & 2010-11, Centennial High School), Wade Meddles (2009-10 & 2008-09, Sierra Lutheran High School), and Bryan Tibaduiza (2007-08, Galena 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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