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**RINGWOOD HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE OKLAHOMA 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 Isai Rodriguez of Ringwood High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Oklahoma Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Rodriguez is the first Gatorade Oklahoma Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Ringwood 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 Rodriguez as Oklahoma'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, Rodriguez 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 junior won the Class 2A state meet this past season with a time of 15:27.78, breaking the tape 1:02.56 ahead of his next-closest competitor and leading the Ringwood-Lomega co-op team to a second-place finish. Rodriguez was undefeated in nine races, including a victory in the Oklahoma Cross Country Meet of Champions in 16:08.56.

Rodriguez has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom. A member of his local Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter, he volunteers locally with the Ringwood High Pep Club. He has also donated his time mowing lawns for area families in need.

"Isai's time at state is something I have never seen before in 20 years of coaching," said Chad Hutchison, head coach of Cherokee High. "He carries himself with great humility and sets a good example for those around him to follow. While on the course, he sets a blistering pace that some make the mistake of trying to duplicate but burn out and fade."

Rodriguez will begin his senior year of high school 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.

Rodriguez joins Gatorade Oklahoma Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Ben Barrett (2014-15 & 2013-14, Norman North High School), Noah Gade (2012-13, Stillwater High School), Tanner Satterthwaite (2011-12, Norman High School), Andrew Leahey (2010-11, Plainview High School), Toby Bothwell (2009-10, Westmoore High School), Taylor Monaghan (2008-09, Union High School), and Steven Baker (2007-08, Union 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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