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## **LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED GATORADE SOUTH DAKOTA 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 Gabe Peters of Lincoln High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade South Dakota Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Peters is the second Gatorade South Dakota Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Lincoln 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 Peters as South Dakota'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, Peters 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-11, 175-pound junior raced to the Class AA individual championship this past season with a time of 15:13.2, leading the Patriots to a second-place finish as a team. A 2015 South Dakota Cross Country and Track & Field Coaches Association All-State selection, Peters also competed at the Nike Cross Nationals Heartland Regional championships, where he finished 50th in 16:03.3.

Peters has maintained a 3.50 GPA in the classroom. A dedicated member of his church youth group, he has volunteered locally on behalf of multiple charity road races.

"Gabe Peters is a very strong runner who takes command of a race very early and challenges anyone to come with him and hang on," said Jason Wagoner, head coach at Roosevelt High. "In my opinion, he is the top cross country in our state this year."

Peters 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.

Peters joins Gatorade South Dakota Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Will Lauer (2014-15, Lincoln High School), Addison DeHaven (2013-14 & 2012-13, Brookings High School), Tony Smoragiewicz (2011-12 & 2010-11, Rapid City Central High School), Josh Heitkamp (2009-10, Washington High School), Alex Muntefering (2008-09, Parkston High School), and Bill Kogel (2007-08, Roosevelt 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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