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**MONTPELIER HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE VERMONT 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 Matt Hynes of Montpelier High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Vermont Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Hynes is the second Gatorade Vermont Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Montpelier 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 Hynes as Vermont'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, Hynes 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-7, 130-pound junior raced to the Division 2 individual state championship this past season with a time of 16:59.8, leading the Solons to the state title as a team. Hynes also won the Burlington Invitational and the NVAC Mountain Division championship, and finished 11th at the New England Cross Country Championships.

Hynes has maintained a 3.39 GPA in the classroom. A devoted member of his church community, he has volunteered locally on behalf of a homeless shelter and environmental preservation efforts.

"Matt has been a phenomenal performer and competitor for three years," said Montpelier coach Tim Noonan. "He is a coach's dream ... and he led our team to Montpelier's first state team championship since 1986."

Hynes 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.

Hynes joins Gatorade Vermont Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Sam Nishi (2014-15 & 2013-14, Harwood Union High School), Daniel Grosvenor (2012-13, Montpelier High School), Malcolm Plunkett (2011-12, South Burlington High School), Brendan Copley (2010-11, Colchester High School), David Sinclair (2009-10, Green Mountain Valley School), Adron Pitmon (2008-09, Mt. Mansfield Union High School), and Kyle Powers (2007-08, St. Johnsbury Academy) 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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