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**UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE WEST VIRGINIA 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 Seth Edwards of University High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade West Virginia Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Edwards is the first Gatorade West Virginia Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from University 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 Edwards as West Virginia'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, Edwards 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, 123-pound senior raced to his second straight Class AAA individual championship this past season with a time of 15:35.8, leading the Hawks to a state title as a team. The state's returning Gatorade Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year, Edwards also won the AAA Region I championship, breaking the tape in 15:53.8.

Edwards has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of Ruby Memorial Hospital and the Special Olympics in addition to completing a service-mission trip to Nicaragua.

"Seth Edwards came to our cross country team four years ago with an abundance of enthusiasm, energy and talent," said University High head coach Ed Frohnapfel. "He has been able to focus his abilities and has become the best male runner in the history of our school."

Edwards 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.

Two-time winner Edwards joins Gatorade West Virginia Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Matthew Brafford (2013-14, George Washington High School), Jacob Burcham (2012-13, 2011-12 & 2010-11, Cabell Midland High School), Cody Pelliccioni (2009-10 & 2008-09, Morgantown High School), and Ryan Beabout (2007-08, Wheeling Park 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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