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**CARL SANDBURG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE ILLINOIS BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 30, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Dylan Jacobs of Carl Sandburg High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Illinois Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Jacobs is the second Gatorade Illinois Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Carl Sandburg 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 Jacobs as Illinois'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, Jacobs joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Lukas Verzbicas (2010-11, 2009-10 Carl Sandburg, Orland Park, Ill.), Megan Goethals (2009-10, Rochester, Rochester Hills, Mich.), Jordan Hasay (2008-09, Mission College Prep., San Luis Obispo, Calif.), Donn Cabral (2007-08, Glastonbury High School, Glastonbury, Conn.) and Chris Derrick (2007-08, Neuqua Valley, Naperville, Ill.).

The 5-foot-11, 140-pound junior raced to first place at the Foot Locker Midwest Regional championships this past season with a time of 14:58.8. Jacobs followed up by taking 11th nationally at the Foot Locker Cross Country Championships to earn All-American honors. He also finished third at the Class 3A state meet, took second at the Nike Cross Nationals Midwest Regional championships and finished 19th at the NXN Final. Jacobs added victories at the Regional and Sectional championships, as well as the Lions Pride Invitational.

A member of his school's Student Athletic Leadership Committee, Jacobs has volunteered locally on behalf of the Lithuanian World Center and Students Against Destructive Decisions. "Dylan accepts challenges and views them as opportunity for growth," said Sandburg coach John O'Malley. "He has continually led his teammates with toughness and determination."

Jacobs has maintained a weighted 4.09 GPA in the classroom. He 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 Player of the Year Selection Committee, 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.

Jacobs joins Gatorade Illinois Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Jon Davis (2015-16, Oakwood High School), Jesse Reiser (2014-15 & 2013-14, McHenry Community High School), Jack Keelan (2012-13, St. Ignatius College Prep.), Michael Clevenger (2011-12, MacArthur High School), Lukas Verzbicas (2010-11 & 2009-10, Carl Sandburg High School), Steve Sulkin (2008-09, York High School), and Chris Derrick (2007-08, Neuqua Valley High School) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Jacobs will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

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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