

Contact: Kelsey Rhoney (312-729- 3685)

**WILMINGTON FRIENDS SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE DELAWARE BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 12, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Connor Nisbet of Wilmington Friends School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Delaware Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Nisbet is the first Gatorade Delaware Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Wilmington Friends 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 field, distinguishes Nisbet as Delaware'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, Nisbet 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-9, 140-pound junior raced to his second consecutive Division 2 individual state championship this past season with a time of 15:37.6. The state's returning Gatorade Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year, Nisbet also won the New Castle County championships. He finished 11th at the Foot Locker Northeast Regional championships, second in the Varsity D race of the Manhattan Invitational and eighth at the Great American Cross Country Festival.

Also a talented musician, Nisbet is a member of his school's student leadership committee. "Nisbet was even faster this year than he was last year," said Dan O'Connell, head coach at St. Andrews School. "He was undefeated against other Delaware runners and he won all the most competitive races."

Nisbet has maintained a 4.01 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.

Two-time winner Nisbet joins Gatorade Delaware Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Kevin Murray (2015-16, Charter School of Wilmington), Kieran Tuntivate (2014-15, Charter School of Wilmington), Patrick Hally (2013-14, Salesianum School), John Mascioli (2012-13, Archmere Academy), Sam Parsons (2011-12, The Tatnall School), Sebastian Oja (2010-11, Archmere Academy), Ryan Lee (2009-10, Archmere Academy), Greg Morrin (2008-09, Saint Mark's), and George Vernon (2007-08, Concord) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Nisbet 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 the conversation on Twitter #GatoradePOY. 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 <http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com/>.

###