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**BOZEMAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MONTANA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 12, 2018) — In its 33<sup>rd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Duncan Hamilton of Bozeman High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Montana Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Hamilton is the fourth Gatorade Montana Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Bozeman 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 field, distinguishes Hamilton as Montana'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, Hamilton 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 6-foot, 138-pound senior earned Second Team All-American status by finishing 11th at the Nike Cross Nationals Final this past season. Hamilton also finished second at the NXN Northwest Regional championships and at the Class AA state meet, where he led the Hawks to a 10th-straight first-place finish as a team. His clocking of 15:16.9 over 5K at the NXN regional is a state record.

A member of Bozeman High's National Honor Society, Hamilton has volunteered locally as part of multiple community service initiatives through the Boy Scouts of America, where he has earned Eagle Scout status. "Duncan clearly puts in the work to be a dominant force on the cross country course," said Sarah Lord, head coach of Billings High. "He doesn't get rattled by the competition and he seems to really trust in his training and his race strategy."

Hamilton has maintained a weighted 4.22 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run cross country on scholarship at Montana State University 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.

Hamilton joins Gatorade Montana Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Chase Equall (2016-17, Bozeman High School), Aidan Reed (2015-16 & 2014-15, Helena High School), Jason Holmes (2013-14, Bozeman High School), Zach Perrin (2012-13, Flathead High School), Jakob Woodland (2011-12, Bozeman High School), Jacob Turner (2010-11, Sentinel High School), Mike Asay (2009-10, Manhattan High School), Drew Coco (2008-09, Whitefish High School), and Patrick Casey (2007-08, Laurel High School) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Hamilton 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/>.

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