

**Contact: Kelsey Rhoney (312-729- 3685)**

**CRATER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE OREGON 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 Andy Monroe of Crater High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Oregon Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Monroe is the first Gatorade Oregon Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Crater 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 Monroe as Oregon'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, Monroe 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-1, 165-pound senior raced to his second consecutive Class 5A individual state championship this past season with a time of 15:19, leading the Comets to the state title as a team. The state's returning Gatorade Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year, Monroe also won the Max King Invitational and the Midwestern League championships. He finished 39th at the Nike Cross Nationals Northwest Regional championships.

A devoted member of his church youth group, Monroe has served as a peer tutor and has volunteered locally on behalf of youth running programs. "Andy was hurting at the end of the season, but he won in what was one of the best finishes ever at the state meet, and led our team to a state title," said Crater coach Justin Loftus. "I've never met a kid as dedicated as he is. His presence and leadership infected the whole team."

Monroe has maintained a 3.99 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in cross country and track and field on scholarship at Stanford 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.

Two-time Monroe joins Gatorade Oregon Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Ahmed Muhumed (2015-16, West Salem High School), Matthew Maton (2014-15 & 2013-14, Summit High School), Jackson Darland (2012-13, Sheldon High School), Travis Neuman (2011-12, Summit High School), Matthew Melancon (2010-11, Sheldon High School), Drew Jordan (2009-10, North Medford), Elliott Jantzer (2008-09, Phoenix High School), and Bryce Burgess (2007-08, Franklin High School) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

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

###