

Contact: Kelsey Rhoney (312-729-3685)

**VALOR CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE COLORADO BOYS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 21, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Cole Sprout of Valor Christian High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Colorado Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Sprout is the first Gatorade Colorado Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Valor Christian 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 track, distinguishes Sprout as Colorado's best high school boys track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Sprout joins an elite alumni association of state track & field award-winners, including Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt High School, Iowa), Allyson Felix (2002-03, Los Angeles Baptist High School, Calif.), Robert Griffin III (2006-07, Copperas Cove High School, Texas), Grant Fisher (2013-14 & 2014-15, Grand Blanc High School, Mich.) and Candace Hill (2014-15, Rockdale County High School, Ga.).

The state's reigning Gatorade Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year, the 5-foot-8, 125-pound sophomore won both the 1600-meter run and the 3200-meter run at the Class 4A state meet this past season as the Eagles finished third as a team. At the Jeffco 4A/5A League Meet, Sprout set an all-class state record in the 3200 with a time of 9:01.53, the No. 42 clocking in the country among prep competitors in 2018 at the time of his selection. At the Oregon Relays, Sprout won the 1500 (3:55.48, No. 11 nationally) and set a sophomore record in the 3000 (8:13.85, No. 2 nationally). Running the 2-mile at this month's Brooks PR Invitational, he took second and set a sophomore record in the 2-mile (8:49.46), a clocking that ranked second in the country at the time of his selection.

Sprout has donated his time by participating in a service-mission trip to a Mexican orphanage and he has volunteered locally with the Denver Rescue Mission to assist the homeless. "Cole is an amazing kid with great discipline and determination to be the best he can be," said Valor Christian head coach Brian Kula. "He is an outstanding student and goes about life with high character and humility."

Sprout has maintained an unweighted 3.98 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his junior 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.

Sprout joins recent Gatorade Colorado Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Isaac Green (2016-17, Monarch High School), Caleb Ojennes (2015-16, Smoky Hill High School), Blake Yount (2014-15, Smoky Hill High School), Kevin McClanahan (2013-14, Erie High School), Connor Turnage (2012-13, Highlands Ranch High School), Raymond Bozmans (2011-12, Fort Collins High School), Connor Winter (2010-11, Arapahoe High School), Trevor Brown (2009-10, Wasson), Mason Finley (2008-09, Buena Vista), Mason Finley (2007-08, Buena Vista), and Jacob J.T. Scheuerman (2006-07, Littleton) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Sprout 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.

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