

**NEWBURY PARK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE CALIFORNIA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 10, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Nico Young of Newbury Park High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade California Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Young is the first Gatorade California Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Newbury Park 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 Young as California'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 February, Young joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Lukas Verzbicas (2010-11, 2009-10 Carl Sandburg High School, Orland Park, Ill.), Megan Goethals (2009-10, Rochester High School, Rochester Hills, Mich.), Jordan Hasay (2008-09, Mission College Preparatory Catholic High School, San Luis Obispo, Calif.) and Chris Derrick (2007-08, Neuqua Valley High School, Naperville, Ill.).

The 5-foot-11, 135-pound senior raced to the national championship this past season, breaking the tape at the Nike Cross Nationals Final with a course-record time of 14:52.3 and leading the Panthers to the national title as a team. Young also won the Division 2 CIF state championship in 14:26.5. He also set a U.S. prep three-mile record of 13:39.7 last fall in winning the Woodbridge Classic, and he broke the tape at the Southern Section finals, the Marmonte League finals and the Clovis Invitational.

Young has volunteered locally for three summers in a row as a camp assistant at Many Mansions for underprivileged youth. "I don't know when I will ever see another athlete with Nico's talent or ability to push himself beyond his limits along with the curiosity to see how truly great he can be," said Newbury Park coach Sean Brosnan. "He's a once-in-a-lifetime athlete who has broken the three-mile cross country national record, and he's preparing to set more records throughout the track season."

Young has maintained a weighted 4.68 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in cross country and track and field on scholarship at Northern Arizona 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 and field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Young joins recent Gatorade California Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year Liam Anderson (2018-19 & 2017-18, Redwood High School), Callum Bolger (2016-17, San Luis Obispo High School), Phillip Rocha (2015-16, Arcadia High School) and Austin Tamagno (2014-15, Brea Olinda High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Young has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of his choosing. He is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit www.Gatorade.com/POY, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.