

**ASHLAND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE OREGON 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 Evan Holland of Ashland High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Oregon Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Holland is the first Gatorade Oregon Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Ashland 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 Holland 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 February, Holland 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 6-foot-2, 140-pound senior raced to the Class 5A individual state championship this past season with a course-record time of 14:30.4, leading the Grizzlies to the state title as a team. The state's returning Gatorade Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year, Holland broke the tape at the Nike Cross Nationals Northwest Regional championships in 15:02.9 and took sixth nationally at the NXN Final, earning All-American honors in the process. He also won at the State of Jefferson Invitational, the Max King Invitational and the Rogue XC Invitational in 2019.

A member of the Boy Scouts of America, Holland has volunteered locally on behalf of a food bank and a Christmas tree recycling program. "Evan is a joy to coach—a team leader with an incredible future," said Ashland coach Hans Voskes. "He loves a challenge and he leads by example, constantly encouraging his teammates to do their best as well."

Holland has maintained a 3.74 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in cross country and track and field on scholarship at the University of Oregon 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.

Two-time winner Holland joins Gatorade Oregon Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year Andy Monroe (2017-18 & 2016-17, Crater High School), Ahmed Muhumed (2015-16, West Salem High School) and Matthew Maton (2014-15, Summit High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Holland 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.