

**STANSBURY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE UTAH 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 Carson Belnap of Stansbury High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Utah Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Belnap is the first Gatorade Utah Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Stansbury 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 Belnap as Utah'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, Belnap 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 4A individual state championship this past season with a time of 15:24.1, leading the Stallions to the state title as a team. Belnap took second at the Nike Cross Nationals Southwest Regional championships and finished ninth nationally at the NXN Final, earning All-American honors in the process. He also broke the tape at the Region 10 championship, finished second at the BYU Autumn Classic and was fourth at the Bob Firman Invitational in 2019.

Belnap has volunteered locally on behalf of youth track programs. "Carson truly found himself this season, week by week, race by race," said Stansbury coach Steve Allen. "He wanted to be a state cross country champion and he never wavered from believing in his goals."

Belnap has maintained a 3.79 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in cross country and track and field on scholarship at Brigham Young 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.

Belnap joins recent Gatorade Utah Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year Luke Grundvig (2018-19, American Fork High School), Aidan Troutner (2017-18, Timpview High School), Casey Clinger (2016-17 & 2015-16, American Fork High School) and Conner Mantz (2014-15, Sky View High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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