

**RUSTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE LOUISIANA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (April 15, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Dyllon Nimmers of Ruston High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Louisiana Boys Cross Country Player of the Year. Nimmers is the first Gatorade Louisiana Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Ruston 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 Nimmers as Louisiana's best high school boys cross country player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Cross Country Player of the Year award to be announced in April, Nimmers joins an elite alumni association of 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-8-inch, 130-pound senior distance talent broke the tape at the LHSAA Class 5A State XC Championships this past season with a time of 15:17.20 over the three-mile course—the fastest all-class clocking of the day—leading the Bearcats to fourth place as a team. A 2020 LHSAA All-State selection, Nimmers went 6-0 at the three-mile distance last fall and also clocked the state's fastest 2020 boys races at two distances with personal-best performances over three miles (15:12.91) and 5K (15:48.00). In addition, he won individual district and regional titles, anchoring Ruston's team titles in both those races. This past winter, he added a Division 1 state title in the 800-meter run on the indoor track.

Nimmers has volunteered on behalf of the Christopher Youth Center for runaway and homeless youth throughout the past decade, providing assistance with yard work, painting and a variety of community service projects, including organizational fundraisers. "Dyllon has more range than any runner I've seen in the last 15 years," said Parkway High head coach Kent Falting. "He could win a state title in any event from 400 meters to 5K. More impressive than his talent is his humility. In victory or defeat, he always shows kindness to his fellow runners, cheering on his teammates and congratulating the opposing runners on their times. He is always willing to give younger runners advice, regardless of the team they compete for. Throughout all of his accomplishments, he has never stopped working to be a better athlete and a better person."

Nimmers has maintained a 3.33 weighted GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at Louisiana State 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 works with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Nimmers joins recent Gatorade Louisiana Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Will Dart (2019-20, Loyola College Prep), Hunter Appleton (2018-19, Brother Martin High School), Adam Wise (2017-18, Fontainebleau High School), and Eric Coston (2016-17, St. Paul's School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Nimmers has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Nimmers is also eligible to submit a 30-second video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$2.7 million across 1,117 organizations.

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.playeroftheyear.gatorade.com, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

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