

**STATE COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE PENNSYLVANIA 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 Brady Bigger of State College High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Cross Country Player of the Year. Bigger is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from State College 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 Bigger as Pennsylvania'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, Bigger 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 6-foot, 152-pound senior raced to the Class AAA individual state championship this past season with a time of 16:07. The reigning Pennsylvania Track and Field Coaches Association Athlete of the Year, Bigger also won the District 6 championship and the Mid Penn championship.

A devoted member of his church youth group, Bigger has served as a peer tutor and as a school ambassador to assist freshmen students in their transition to high school. "Brady has grown to become a leader on and off the field of competition," said State College coach Dave Felice. "He's an excellent role model for athletes everywhere."

Bigger has maintained a weighted 4.55 GPA in the classroom. He remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

Bigger joins recent Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Patrick Anderson (2019-20 & 2018-19, Mount Lebanon High School), Rusty Kujdych (2017-18, Neshaminy High School), and Noah Affolder (2016-17, Carlisle High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Bigger has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Bigger 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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