

**MELISSA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE TEXAS 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 Judson Greer of Melissa High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Texas Boys Cross Country Player of the Year. Greer is the first Gatorade Texas Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Melissa 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 Greer as Texas'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, Greer 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, 150-pound senior raced to his third consecutive Class 4A individual state championship this past season with a time of 14:51.9, leading the Cardinals to second place as a team. Greer also won the national XC Town USA Meet of Champions in 15:41.1. He captured the district championship, the region championship and the Lovejoy Fall Festival, while placing second at the Desert Twilight Festival.

A devoted member of his church community, Greer has volunteered locally on behalf of food pantries and the Special Olympics. "What sets Judson apart from other athletes is his ability to remain dedicated to his craft," said Melissa coach Kelley Pitzer. "His willingness to push himself not just one page above the rest, but chapters ahead, not only made him the best, but also made his teammates better."

Greer has maintained a weighted 4.67 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 North Carolina 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.

Greer joins recent Gatorade Texas Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Ryan Schoppe (2019-20, La Porte High School), Graydon Morris (2018-19 & 2017-18, Aledo High School) and Reed Brown (2016-17, Carroll Senior High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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