

**SKYRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE UTAH BOYS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (April 15, 2021) — In its 36<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Creed Thompson of Skyridge High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Utah Boys Cross Country Player of the Year. Thompson is the first Gatorade Utah Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Skyridge 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 Thompson as Utah'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, Thompson 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-11, 120-pound senior took second place at the RunningLane National Championships this past season with a time of 14:34.38. Thompson also finished second at the Class 6A state championship meet in 16:20.4, leading the Falcons to the state title as a team. He won the Region 4 championship, the TwiKnight Invitational, the Wasatch Invitational and the 6A Divisionals in 2020.

Thompson has volunteered locally on behalf of community service initiatives in association with the National Honor Society and has raised funds to benefit the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. "Creed has some of the greatest self discipline that I have seen in any athlete," said Skyridge coach Jamie Alvizo. "He realizes that there are things you can't control, but the things you can control, he really focuses on."

Thompson has maintained a 4.0 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 & 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.

Thompson joins recent Gatorade Utah Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Carson Belnap (2019-20, Stansbury High School), Luke Grundvig (2018-19, American Fork High School), Aidan Troutner (2017-18, Timpview High School), and Casey Clinger (2016-17, American Fork High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Thompson has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Thompson 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](http://www.playeroftheyear.gatorade.com), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](https://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

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