

**ESSEX HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE VERMONT 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 Brady Martisus of Essex High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Vermont Boys Cross Country Player of the Year. Martisus is the second Gatorade Vermont Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Essex 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 Martisus as Vermont'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, Martisus 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-5, 130-pound senior raced to the Division 1 individual state championship this past season with a time of 16:24, leading the Hornets to third place as a team. Martisus also won the Vermont Meet of Champions with a time of 16:02.2 and broke the tape at the SeaHornet Invitational.

A member of his school's Athletic Leadership Council, Martisus has volunteered locally on behalf of elementary school literacy outreach initiatives. "Brady Martisus has an amazing work ethic that I think was clear by how he continued to develop and become the clear number one runner in the state of Vermont by his senior year," said Scott Bliss, head coach at Champlain Valley Union High. "He's always been a great competitor but also always showed great sportsmanship."

Martisus has maintained a 3.45 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 Portland 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.

Martisus joins recent Gatorade Vermont Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Henry Farrington (2019-20 & 2018-19, Essex High School), Stephen Looke (2017-18, U-32 High School), and Tyler Marshall (2016-17, Champlain Valley Union High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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

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