

**CONARD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE CONNECTICUT BOYS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 31, 2022) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Gavin Sherry** of **Conard High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Connecticut Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Sherry is the first Gatorade Connecticut Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Conard 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 Sherry as Connecticut'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 February, Sherry 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-6, 135-pound senior raced to the individual title at the New England Cross Country Championships this past season with a time of 15:54.8. The state's two-time returning Gatorade Player of the Year in boys cross country, Sherry also won the State Open championship, the Class L state championship and the Eastbay Northeast Regional Championships. He took third at the national Eastbay Cross Country Championships (formerly Foot Locker) in 15:17.3.

Also a talented musician, Sherry has volunteered locally on behalf of multiple community service initiatives with the National Honor Society. "Gavin Sherry wasn't even challenged until nationals this year," said Erik Petersen, head coach at Simsbury High School. "He is extremely talented and he packages that with an incredibly driven work ethic."

Sherry has maintained a 4.39 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at Stanford 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Three-time winner Sherry joins recent Gatorade Connecticut Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Matthew Farrell (2018-19, Loomis Chaffee School) and Drew Thompson (2017-18, Fairfield College Preparatory School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, Sherry has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. Sherry is also eligible to submit a short 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 \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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