

**YERINGTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEVADA 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 **Kutoven Stevens** of **Yerington High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Nevada Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Stevens is the first Gatorade Nevada Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Yerington 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 Stevens as Nevada'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, Stevens 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-9, 135-pound senior raced to the Class 1A-2A individual state championship this past season with a time of 16:28. Stevens also won the Reed Invitational, the Lowry Invitational, the Wildfire Invitational and the Truckee Invitational. In addition, he broke the tape at the Nevada Union Invitational and the Regional championship.

A devoted member of his first nations tribe, Stevens organized the Remembrance Run, a two-day, 50-mile run honoring his great grandfather and countless other Native Americans who were forced from their homes and mistreated at boarding schools. "What sets Kutoven Stevens apart from other athletes is his work ethic," said Lupe Cabada, head coach at Damonte Ranch High School. "He's like the energizer bunny—he never gets tired, he just keeps going. Not only is he a great athlete, he's also a great student and an even better human being."

Stevens has maintained a 3.93 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Stevens joins recent Gatorade Nevada Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Preston Humes (2020-21, Moapa Valley High School), Christian Franklin (2019-20, Valley High School), Jared Marchegger (2018-19, Sierra Lutheran High School), and William Fallini-Haas (2017-18, Spring Creek High 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, Stevens 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. Stevens 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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