

**BRIDGEWATER-RARITAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEW JERSEY 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 **Marco Langon** of **Bridgewater-Raritan High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade New Jersey Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Langon is the first Gatorade New Jersey Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Bridgewater-Raritan 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 Langon as New Jersey'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, Langon 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, 135-pound senior raced to the individual title at the state Meet of Champions this past season with a time of 15:06. Langon also won the Group 4 state championship in 15:38, and broke the tape at the Shore Coaches Classic, the North 2 Sectionals, the Skyland Conference Championships and the Varsity D race at the prestigious Manhattan College Invitational. He took second at the Eastbay Northeast Regional Championships and finished ninth at the national Eastbay Cross Country Championships, earning All-American honors in the process.

Langon has volunteered locally on behalf of a senior citizens center, youth running programs and food-donation drives. "Marco is a tremendous talent who is determined to work hard," said Bridgewater-Raritan High School coach Dave Evans. "The thing that sets him apart from every other athlete I have ever coached is how much he wants to win. He's absolutely determined to be the best he can be."

Langon has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at Villanova 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.

Langon joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Vidhur Polam (2020-21, South Brunswick High School), Liam Murphy (2019-20, Allentown High School), Jack Stanley (2018-19, West Morris Mendham High School), and Devin Hart (2017-18, Point Pleasant Borough 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, Langon 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. Langon 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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