

**ST. JOHNSBURY ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VERMONT 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 **Evan Thornton-Sherman** of **St. Johnsbury Academy** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Vermont Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Thornton-Sherman is the second Gatorade Vermont Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Johnsbury Academy.

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 Thornton-Sherman 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 February, Thornton-Sherman 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, 130-pound senior raced to the Division 1 individual state championship this past season with a time of 16:34, leading the Hilltoppers to the state team title, the programs first in more than three generations. Thornton-Sherman also won the NVAC Mountain Division championship and the Randolph Invitational. He took second at the Manchester Invitational, fifth in the Eastern States Championship race at the prestigious Manhattan College Invitational and finished sixth at the New England Championships.

Also a talented musician, Thornton-Sherman is a member of his school's Science Olympiad team and has served as a lifeguard at two local lakes. "Evan is the most driven athlete I have coached," said St. Johnsbury Academy coach Chip Langmaid. "Even when he was dominating the state competition—his closest race was a 22-second win—he was driven to break course records and continually improve. He set the tone for our first state championship in 63 years."

Thornton-Sherman has maintained an A average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at the University of Maine 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.

Thornton-Sherman joins recent Gatorade Vermont Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Brady Martisus (2020-21, Essex High School), Henry Farrington (2019-20 & 2018-19, Essex High School), and Stephen Looke (2017-18, U-32 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, Thornton-Sherman 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. Thornton-Sherman 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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