

**VALDERS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WISCONSIN 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 **Shane Griepentrog** of **Valders High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Wisconsin Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Griepentrog is the first Gatorade Wisconsin Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Valders 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 Griepentrog as Wisconsin'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, Griepentrog 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, 115-pound senior won the Division 3 state meet this past season with a meet-record time of 15:38.6, breaking the tape 35.5 seconds ahead of his next-closest competitor and leading the Vikings to their third team title in his four years at Valders. Griepentrog won eight of nine races in which he competed. All eight of his victories came by at least 28 seconds.

A member of his school's chapter of the Future Business Leaders of America, Griepentrog has volunteered locally at a nursing home and as a peer mentor. He is also an Altar Boy at his church. "Shane's self-discipline, commitment and consistent training are everything that a coach wants in an athlete," said Bill Dietrich, head coach of Valders High School. "You can call Shane gutsy, tough and a runner with passion."

Griepentrog has maintained a 3.91 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at the University of Minnesota 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.

Griepentrog joins recent Gatorade Wisconsin Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Joshua Truchon (2020-21, Nathan Hale High School), Jake Krause (2019-20, Hortonville High School), and Drew Bosley (2018-19 & 2017-18, Homestead 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, Griepentrog 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. Griepentrog 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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