

**FAYETTEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ARKANSAS BOYS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 30, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Hudson Betts** of **Fayetteville High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Arkansas Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Betts is the third Gatorade Arkansas Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Fayetteville 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 Betts as Arkansas' 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, Betts joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners, including Parker Wolfe (2020-21, Cherry Creek High School, Greenwood Village, Colo.), Nico Young (2019-20, Newbury Park High School, Newbury Park, Calif.), Megan Goethals (2009-10, Rochester High School, Rochester Hills, Mich.) and Jordan Hasay (2008-09, Mission College Preparatory Catholic High School, San Luis Obispo, Calif.).

The 6-foot-1, 150-pound senior raced to his second consecutive Class 6A individual championship in a course-record time of 15:09.6 this past season. Betts also finished fourth at the prestigious Chile Pepper Festival with a personal-best clocking of 14:55.0. The state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, he also led the Bulldogs to second place as a team at the state championships.

Betts has volunteered locally with the Special Olympics and the Central United Methodist Church Leadership program. "Hudson Betts elevated his game to new levels this past season, punctuated by a course record performance at the state championships," said PrepCalTrack.com editor Rich Gonzalez. "What made the record-breaking achievement even more remarkable was the fact he did so while competing with a severely infected ingrown toenail that required surgery the day after the season ended."

Betts has maintained a 3.81 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at the University of Tennessee 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.

Two-time winner Betts joins recent Gatorade Arkansas Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Jack Williams (2020-21, Fayetteville High School), Lukas Pabst (2019-20, Bentonville High School), and Camren Fischer (2018-19, Fayetteville High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Being a Gatorade Player of the Year means paying it forward for the next generation. Through Gatorade's Play it Forward initiative, every Player of the Year receives a grant to give to one of Gatorade's social impact partners, supporting Gatorade's ambition to fuel the future of sport. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

For nearly 40 years, Gatorade has honored high school athletes at the top of their game as teammates, supporting their communities and achieving academic success. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes and community leaders, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport.

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.