

**NEWBURY PARK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE CALIFORNIA 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 **Leo Young** of **Newbury Park High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade California Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Young is the third Gatorade California Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Newbury Park 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 Young as California'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, Young 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 5-foot-10, 145-pound senior raced to the second-fastest time ever on the venerable Woodward Park state meet course this past season and anchored the Panthers to a team title at the Nike Cross Nationals. Young broke the tape at the Clovis Invitational, took second at the Division 1 state meet and crossed the line 11th at Nike nationals last fall. His victory at the USATF U20 Cross Country Championships in January earned him a berth at the 2023 World Athletics Cross Country Championships in Australia on February 18.

Young has volunteered locally as a board member in the school's chapter of Doctors of the World, helping to organize a Ukraine Drive, which resulted in the donation of thousands of pairs of gloves, bandages and other medical supplies. "Posting the second-fastest time in history on a well-tested Woodward Park state meet course was a tremendous season highlight for Leo," said PrepCalTrack editor Rich Gonzalez. "But his victory at the USATF U20 Championships in 23:47.0 over 8K stamped him as a high-achieving leader in the sport."

Young has maintained a 3.95 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at Stanford 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.

Young joins recent Gatorade California Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Colin Sahlman (2021-22 & 2020-21, Newbury Park High School), Nico Young (2019-20, Newbury Park High School), and Liam Anderson (2018-19, Redwood 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.