

**RIDGEFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE CONNECTICUT 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 **Steven Hergenrother** of **Ridgefield High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Connecticut Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Hergenrother is the first Gatorade Connecticut Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Ridgefield 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 Hergenrother as Connecticut'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, Hergenrother 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-9, 130-pound junior raced to victory at both the Class LL and CIAC State Open Championships, pacing the Tigers to a second-place finish as a team in the latter. Hergenrother also crossed the line second at the New England Championships. He capped his season by taking 11th at the Champs Sports Northeast Regionals.

Hergenrother has volunteered locally as part of community service initiatives on behalf of Lion's Heart in addition to serving as a peer tutor and in school student government. "Steven Hergenrother is the complete package: Outstanding runner (Class LL champion), accomplished scholar (4.50 unweighted GPA) and highly active contributor within his community," said Rich Gonzalez, editor of PrepCalTrack. "An excellent team leader and All-American on the track, Hergenrother captured the CIAC Open Division state title then placed second at the prestigious New England Championships."

Hergenrother has maintained an unweighted 4.50 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his senior year of high school 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.

Hergenrother joins recent Gatorade Connecticut Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Gavin Sherry (2021-22, 2020-21, & 2019-20, Conard High School) and Matthew Farrell (2018-19, Loomis Chaffee 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.