

**LEON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE FLORIDA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (January 30, 2023) — In its 38<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Patrick Koon** of **Leon High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Florida Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Koon is the third Gatorade Florida Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Leon 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 Koon as Florida’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, Koon 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, 130-pound junior raced to victory at the Class 3A state championships with a time of 14:56.70 this past season, leading the Lions to a fourth-place team finish. Koon also won four invitationals during the course of an unbeaten regular season. He clocked a personal-best 14:43.09 to break the tape at the Southern Showcase.

Koon has volunteered locally at the School of Arts and Sciences Summer Camp and has fundraised on behalf of the Strides for Seizures program. He also participates in multiple school clubs. “Patrick Koon wowed Florida fans during a record-breaking season that included setting a new course standard at the FSU Pre-State Invitational. He also ran the second-fastest boys 5K time in state history at the Southern Showcase and clocked the fastest all-class time to win the 3A state title by an impressive 29 seconds,” said PrepCalTrack editor Rich Gonzalez. “Koon won all four of his invitational races this past season.”

Koon has maintained a weighted 4.63 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.

Koon joins recent Gatorade Florida Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Rheinhardt Harrison (2021-22 & 2020-21, Nease High School), Ethan Geiger (2019-20, Robinson High School), and Charles Hicks (2018-19, The Bolles 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY), Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade) and Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).