

**COVINGTON CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE KENTUCKY 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 **Will Sheets** of **Covington Catholic High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Kentucky Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Sheets is the first Gatorade Kentucky Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Covington Catholic 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 Sheets as Kentucky'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, Sheets 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-2, 150-pound sophomore raced to victory at the Class 3A State Championships in a personal-best time of 15:28.2 this past season, which was the fastest all-class time of the day, and paced the Colonels to third-place as a team. Sheets improved considerably from the previous fall and was more than a minute faster in his year-over-year performances at multiple venues. He was the state's second-fastest finisher at the Nike XC Town Twilight Invitational in Indiana, where he clocked a 15:44.90.

Sheets has volunteered locally at the Family Promise Welcome House for the homeless. He has also donated his time to the Diocese of Covington's Children's Home, which provides respite care for children in the foster care system. "Covington Catholic sophomore Will Sheets found his groove at the perfect time, posting the fastest all-class clocking at the state meet while winning the Class AAA title by a dozen seconds," said PrepCalTrack editor Rich Gonzalez. "Sheets became the first sophomore since St. Xavier's Bobby Curtis 22 years ago to win in the state's highest classification. His winning time of 15:28.2 also moved him into the all-time top 10 for best clockings on the course."

Sheets has maintained a weighted 4.23 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his junior 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.

Sheets joins recent Gatorade Kentucky Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Caden Miracle (2021-22, Bell County High School), Jackson Watts (2020-21, Madisonville-North Hopkins High School), Conner O'Shea (2019-20, Madison Central High School), and Keeton Thornsberry (2018-19, Holy Cross 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](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).