

**CHRIST SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NORTH CAROLINA 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 **Rocky Hansen** of **Christ School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade North Carolina Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Hansen is the first Gatorade North Carolina Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Christ 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 Hansen as North Carolina'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 January, Hansen 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, 140-pound senior raced to victory by a 36-second margin at the NCISAA Class 4A state championships this past season, pacing the Greenies to the state title as a team. Hansen also won the Champs Sports South Regionals, to qualify for the national meet, where he finished 11th to earn Third Team All-America honors. Unbeaten by an in-state runner during the 2022 campaign, he clocked a personal-best time of 14:29.20 when he broke the tape at the Alexander / Asics Invitational, one of his nine meet wins last fall.

Hansen has volunteered locally at the Calvary Episcopal Church Food Pantry, the Veterans Farm and Veterans Restoration Quarters in addition to donating his time through the Big Brothers Big Sisters program. "Rocky Hansen authored the most impressive season in North Carolina history, producing five course records and six meet records in a continual show of domination," said PrepCalTrack editor Rich Gonzalez. "His six sub-15:00 5k performances in a single season is unprecedented for a North Carolina prep."

Hansen has maintained a weighted 4.51 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at Wake Forest 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.

Hansen joins recent Gatorade North Carolina Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Will Soule (2021-22, Mount Tabor High School), Murphy Smith (2020-21, Ardrey Kell High School), Ian Harrison (2019-20, Panther Creek High School), and Anton Idhammar (2018-19, Cary 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.

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