

**BUTLER AREA SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE PENNSYLVANIA 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 **Drew Griffith** of **Butler Area Senior High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Griffith is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Butler Area Senior 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 Griffith as Pennsylvania'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, Griffith 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, 135-pound junior won the Champs Sports Northeast Regional Championship this past season with a time of 15:20.9, qualifying for nationals, where he took 8th. Griffith crossed the line second at the Class AAA state meet and won five of the seven meets he entered last fall. He clocked a personal-best 14:49.3 at the Carlisle Invitational.

Griffith has volunteered locally in the school district's Backpack Program, which provides at-home food for students in need. "Drew Griffith scorched his way to a sub-14:50 effort for 5K at the Carlisle Invite to stamp himself as one of the state's all-time junior class greats, then won the Champs Sports Northeast Regionals," said PrepCalTrack editor Rich Gonzalez. "He put an exclamation point on his season by crossing the line eighth at Champs Sports Nationals to earn Second Team All-America honors."

Griffith has maintained a weighted 4.18 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.

Griffith joins recent Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Gary Martin (2021-22, Archbishop Wood High School), Brady Bigger (2020-21, State College High School), and Patrick Anderson (2019-20 & 2018-19, Mount Lebanon 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.