

**VANDEGRIFT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE TEXAS 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 **Kevin Sanchez** of **Vandegrift High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Texas Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Sanchez is the first Gatorade Texas Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Vandegrift 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 Sanchez as Texas' 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, Sanchez 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, 145-pound senior raced to a victory at the Class 6A state meet this past season, breaking the tape in 15:26.3 and pacing the Vipers to second place as a team. A two-time state cross country champion, Sanchez won four invitationals this past season and qualified for both national championship meets. He was the state's fastest competitor at the Champs Sports South Regionals, where he took third, and was runner up at the Nike Cross South Regionals.

Sanchez has volunteered locally at youth track meets and invented a game called Precision Fut, designed for underserved youth to be played in small spaces with inexpensive equipment. His goal is to provide game kits to schools in low-income neighborhoods in Mexico, where he was born. "Vandegrift senior Kevin Sanchez had no problem winning his second straight state crown, capturing the 6A title by a 15-second margin in completing an unbeaten regular season," said PrepCalTrack editor Rich Gonzalez. He was the lone Texan to qualify for both national meets."

Sanchez has maintained a 4.62 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at the University of Notre Dame 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.

Sanchez joins recent Gatorade Texas Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Emmanuel Sgouros (2021-22, St. John's School), Judson Greer (2020-21, Melissa High School), Ryan Schoppe (2019-20, La Porte High School), and Graydon Morris (2018-19, Aledo 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.