

**ONALASKA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE WISCONSIN 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 **Manny Putz** of **Onalaska High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Wisconsin Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Putz is the first Gatorade Wisconsin Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Onalaska 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 Putz as Wisconsin'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, Putz 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-5, 129-pound sophomore raced to victory at the Division 1 state championship, winning with a lean at the finish line to break the tape in 15:26.7, just 0.20 seconds ahead of his next-closest competitor. Putz was the state's top performer at the Roy Griak Invitational, where he finished fourth overall in 15:38.0. He capped his season by taking 11<sup>th</sup> at the Champs Sports Midwest Regionals.

Putz has volunteered locally on behalf of Rotary Lights of La Crosse, helping with visitor hospitality. He's also donated his time with St. Paul's Church as part of multiple community service initiatives. "Manny Putz's sophomore campaign was full of highlights as he clocked top-15 performances at regional qualifiers for the two highest-profile national championship meets," said PrepCalTrack editor Rich Gonzalez. "He also won a state title and produced a top-5 finish against a deep field at the Roy Griak Invitational."

Putz has maintained a 3.93 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.

Putz joins recent Gatorade Wisconsin Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Shane Griepentrog (2021-22, Valders High School), Joshua Truchon (2020-21, Nathan Hale High School), Jake Krause (2019-20, Hortonville High School), and Drew Bosley (2018-19, Homestead 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).