

**DANA HILLS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE CALIFORNIA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 26, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Evan Noonan** of **Dana Hills High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade California Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Noonan is the first Gatorade California Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Dana Hills High School.

The award, which celebrates the nation's top high school athletes for excellence on the field, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes Noonan as California's best high school boys cross country player. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport, touting an all-star group of alumni that includes Lukas Verzbicas (2010-11 & 2009-10, Carl Sandburg High School, Ill.) and Edward Cheserek (2012-13, St. Benedict's Preparatory School, N.J.).

The 6-foot, 145-pound junior broke the tape at the Division 3 State Championships in a personal-best time of 14:35.3 this past season, leading the Dolphins to the team title. Noonan also won the Woodbridge Classic and was the only runner nationally to thrice dip under 14 minutes for three miles. He took second at the highly competitive Bob Firman Invitational, losing by a split second to the eventual national champion.

An avid drummer who has performed in live concerts with various bands at the renowned "House of Blues" venue in Anaheim, Noonan has volunteered locally on behalf of Mercy Warehouse, which provides donated goods from real estate sales to those in need. He has also volunteered with Operation Santa Claus, assisting in the collection and distribution of donated toys for foster children in Orange County. "Evan Noonan compiled the strongest race ledger in Division 3 state history, not only breaking the divisional course record, but also winning the nation's largest meet and splitting two very close race outcomes against the eventual Nike Cross Nationals champion," said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. "With one high school year remaining, he has put himself squarely in the discussion for the best talent in Golden State history."

Noonan has maintained a 3.84 weighted 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.

Noonan joins recent Gatorade California Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Leo Young (2022-23, Newbury Park High School), Colin Sahlman (2021-22 & 2020-21, Newbury Park High School) and Nico Young (2019-20, Newbury Park High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

As part of Gatorade's commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$4.9 million across more than 1,600 organizations.

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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