

**SALESIANUM SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE DELAWARE BOYS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (January 26, 2024) — In its 39<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Ethan Walther** of **Salesianum School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Delaware Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Walther is the third Gatorade Delaware Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Salesianum 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 Walther as Delaware’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 5-foot-8, 135-pound junior broke the tape at the Division 1 State Championships this past season in an all-class fastest time of 16:35.2, earning his second consecutive state championships while pacing the Sallies to the team title. Walther took 11<sup>th</sup> in the featured Eastern States Championship race at the Manhattan Invitational. He also won the Blue Division race at the Great American Cross Country Festival.

A member of his school’s National Honor Society, Walther has volunteered locally as a youth lacrosse coach. While attending Delaware Military Academy, he was a National Junior ROTC platoon leader and held the rank of chief. “Ethan Walther legged out his second consecutive state individual title and his performances this past fall signaled a clear breakthrough that bodes well for his senior season,” said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. “Unbeaten against in-state foes, his willingness to challenge himself across state lines resulted in great progress.”

Walther has maintained a 4.10 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.

Walther joins recent Gatorade Delaware Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Jonathan Drew (2022-23, Middletown High School), Ryan Banko (2021-22, Salesianum School), Declan McDonnell (2020-21, Tatnall School) and Andrew Avila (2019-20, Charter School of Wilmington), 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](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).

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