

**SOUTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MINNESOTA 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 **Sam Scott** of **Southwest High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Minnesota Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Scott is the first Gatorade Minnesota Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Southwest 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 Scott as Minnesota’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, 130-pound senior finished 12th at the Nike Cross Nationals Final this past season, clocking a time of 15:29.0 to earn Second Team All-America honors. Scott, who also took 15th at the Foot Locker Midwest Regional Championship, won the silver medal in the Gold Division race at the competitive Roy Griak Invitational. His fourth-place finish at the NXR Heartland Regional came in a personal-best 14:36.4.

Scott has volunteered locally on behalf of both Minneapolis Parks and Recreation and Minneapolis United as a soccer official and has served as assistant coach for the Keliix Soccer Club youth program. During the Minneapolis teachers’ strike of 2022, he donated his time providing child care at the Carl W. Kroening Nature Center. “Sam Scott nailed the perfect time to peak, surprising many with his clutch All-American performance at Nike Cross Nationals in capping what was also an unbeaten season against in-state rivals,” said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack.

Scott has maintained a 3.58 weighted GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at the University of Minnesota 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.

Scott joins recent Gatorade Minnesota Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Noah Breker (2022-23 & 2021-22, Armstrong High School), Ethan Vargas (2020-21, Stillwater Area High School) and Nick Scheller (2019-20, Chanhassen 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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