

**FREMONT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEBRASKA 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 **Juan Gonzalez** of **Fremont High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Nebraska Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Gonzalez is the second Gatorade Nebraska Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Fremont 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 Gonzalez as Nebraska’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-7, 130-pound junior was a rare double-national qualifier this past season, placing 10th at the Foot Locker Cross Country Championships and finishing 42nd at the Nike Cross Nationals Final, which made him one of only four prep boys in the country to race in both championship fields. Gonzalez, who won seven races in 2023, broke the tape at the Class A state meet in a time of 15:26.6, clocking the fastest all-class performance. His time of 14:33.8 at the Nike Cross Heartland Regional was the fastest performance of the year by a Nebraska prep and his run at Foot Locker nationals earned him Second Team All-America honors.

Gonzalez has volunteered locally assisting the upkeep of Wildwood Park, a forested, 37-acre expanse near the Platte River. He’s also served as an assistant youth coach for the Fremont Track Club and as an informational aide at the Middle School Athletics Orientation Day. “Juan Gonzalez lived a season that most distance runners only dream about, qualifying for both mainstream national championship meets while setting school course records in 11 of his 12 races,” said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. “His best in-state performance ranked as a true head turner as he delivered the fourth-fastest 5k time on the state meet course in the last 35 years.”

Gonzalez has maintained a 3.37 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.

Gonzalez joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Carson Noecker (2022-23, Hartington-Newcastle High School), Gabe Hinrichs (2021-22, Elkhorn South High School) and Liem Chot (2020-21 & 2019-20, North Star 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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