

**CRATER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE OREGON 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 **Tayvon Kitchen** of **Crater High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Oregon Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Kitchen is the third Gatorade Oregon Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Crater 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 Kitchen as Oregon’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, 130-pound junior won the Class 5A state title this past season, clocking a time of 15:26.2 and leading the Comets to the team championship. Kitchen earned Nike Cross Northwest Regionals First Team All-Region accolades with a fourth-place finish in that race. He also took 25th at the Woodbridge Classic, which showcased the deepest lineup of talent in the country.

A decorated member of his school’s DECA chapter and also a National Honor Society member, Kitchen has volunteered locally as part of his church’s Welfare Farm program that provides humanitarian aid to needy families. He also serves as president of Crater High’s School Improvement Committee. “After leading his team to a 3-peat at states, Tayvon Kitchen turned in a standout performance at NXN Northwest,” said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. “His season highlights included a personal-best over three miles (14:19.1) and a PR at 5K (14:57.16), giving him the best race résumé in Oregon last fall.”

Kitchen has maintained a 4.14 GPA weighted 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.

Kitchen joins recent Gatorade Oregon Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Tyrone Gorze (2022-23 & 2021-22, Crater High School), Cameron Stein (2020-21, Ashland High School) and Evan Holland (2019-20 & 2018-19, Ashland 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](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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