

**BUTLER AREA SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE PENNSYLVANIA 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 **Drew Griffith** of **Butler Area Senior High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Griffith is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Butler Area Senior 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 Griffith as Pennsylvania’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-11, 135-pound senior broke the tape at the Foot Locker National Championships this past season with a time of 15:06.9. A two-time Gatorade award winner, Griffith also dominated at the Class 3A state meet to win by a commanding 21 seconds. His most notable in-season triumph came at the MileStat.com Invitational, where he clocked a personal-best 14:21.0.

A recipient of the Good Citizenship Award by the State of Pennsylvania, Griffith has volunteered locally with the Backpack Program, an initiative in his school district that provides food at home for students in need. He has also donated his time to Operation Christmas Child through Samaritan’s Purse, which collects and presents gift-filled shoeboxes to boys and girls around the world. “Drew Griffith became the first Pennsylvania runner to win the Foot Locker national title in the 44-year history of the race,” said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. “His personal-best clocking last fall was the nation’s fastest prep 5K of 2023.”

Griffith has maintained a 4.40 weighted GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at University of Notre Dame 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.

Two-time winner Griffith joins recent Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Gary Martin (2021-22, Archbishop Wood High School), Brady Bigger (2020-21, State College High School) and Patrick Anderson (2019-20 & 2018-19, Mount Lebanon 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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