

**CUMBERLAND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE RHODE ISLAND 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 **Sam Henderson** of **Cumberland High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Rhode Island Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Henderson is the second Gatorade Rhode Island Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Cumberland 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 Henderson as Rhode Island’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 won the state meet with a time of 15:33.29, breaking the tape 13.85 seconds ahead of his next-closest competitor and leading the Clippers to a second-place finish as a team. Henderson won the Class A State Meet by 38 seconds. He was also the state’s top finisher at the New England Cross Country Championships, placing seventh in 15:44.25.

The vice president of the Cumberland High School student body, Henderson has volunteered locally as a peer tutor. “Sam Henderson ran his best when it counted the most,” said Paul Tetreault, head coach of North Kingstown High School. “And it seemed that the bigger the meet, the better he ran.”

Henderson has maintained a 3.77 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.

Henderson joins recent Gatorade Rhode Island Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Devan Kipyego (2022-23 & 2021-22, St. Raphael Academy) and Jack McLoughlin (2020-21 & 2019-20, La Salle Academy), 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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