

**THE WEBB SCHOOL OF KNOXVILLE STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE TENNESSEE 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 **Colin Eckerman** of **The Webb School of Knoxville** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Tennessee Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Eckerman is the second Gatorade Tennessee Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from The Webb School of Knoxville.

The award, which celebrates the nation's top high school athletes for excellence on the field, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes Eckerman as Tennessee'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, 145-pound senior raced to 12th place at the Foot Locker National Championships this past season, crossing the line with a time of 15:35.1 to capture Third Team All-America honors. Eckerman also won the Division 2, Class AA state title in thrilling fashion, emerging victorious by less than one second. He took sixth at the Nike Cross Southeast Regional Championship in a personal-best time of 14:49.9 to earn First Team All-Region recognition.

An avid golfer who also collects baseball cards, Eckerman has volunteered locally as lead coordinator of an inaugural running camp for youth participants ages 4 to 11. In addition, he's donated his time assisting with meet management at community road races. "One of only four prep boys in the country to qualify for both mainstream national championship meets, Colin Eckerman earned All-American status at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships," said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. "His Top 25 finish at the Nike Cross Nationals Final coupled with his all-class best clocking at the state meet gave him the state's best racing resume in 2023."

Eckerman has maintained a 4.12 weighted GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at Furman University 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.

Eckerman joins recent Gatorade Tennessee Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Keegan Smith (2022-23 & 2021-22, Knoxville Catholic High School), Aiden Britt (2020-21, Lebanon High School) and Silas Winders (2019-20, Henry County 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.

###