

**MILLS E. GODWIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VIRGINIA 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 **Berkley Nance** of **Mills E. Godwin High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Virginia Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Nance is the first Gatorade Virginia Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Mills E. Godwin 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 Nance as Virginia’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, 120-pound senior raced to fourth place at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships this past season, clocking a time of 15:17.5 to produce the best performance by a Virginia runner at nationals since former Gatorade National Player of the Year Drew Hunter’s victory in 2015. Nance also secured top-five finishes—2nd and 4th, respectively—at the Nike Cross Southeast Regional Championships and the Foot Locker South Regional Championships. The VHSL Class 5 state champion, he earned the silver medal at the MileStat.com Invitational and took fifth at the deep and talented Woodbridge Classic.

A member of the National Honor Society as well as his school’s Math Honors Society, English Honors Society and Science Honors Society, Nance has volunteered locally on behalf of his church youth council, leading the planning of activities and service projects. “One of only four athletes in the country to qualify for both national meets, Nance earned All-America honors with a fourth-place finish at Foot Locker,” said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. “Among the most respected and well-liked athletes across the national landscape, he was at his best when the stakes were highest.”

Nance has maintained a 4.21 weighted GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at Brigham Young 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.

Nance joins recent Gatorade Virginia Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Conner Rutherford (2022-23, Blacksburg High School), Owen McArdle (2021-22, Yorktown High School), Bryce Lentz (2020-21, Colgan High School) and Daniel O’Brien (2019-20, Virginia Episcopal 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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