

**ANACORTES HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WASHINGTON 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 **Parker Mong** of **Anacortes High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Washington Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Mong is the first Gatorade Washington Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Anacortes 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 Mong as Washington’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-10, 140-pound senior won the individual title at the Class 2A State Championships this past season, racing to a time of 15:27.3 and propelling the Seahawks to the silver medal as a team. Mong earned First Team All-Region honors with a fifth-place showing at the Nike Cross Northwest regionals. He also recorded a high-profile race victory at the Nike Twilight Invitational and a runner-up finish as the top Washington competitor at the Nike Hole In The Wall Invitational.

Mong has volunteered locally as part of his school’s Broadcast Club, providing play-by-play and color commentary for its streamed athletic events. He has also donated his time as team manager for his school’s basketball team. “Parker Mong quietly fashioned a stellar campaign in 2023 while notching major victories,” said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. “His signature performance came at the most opportune time at the highly competitive Nike Cross Northwest regionals, enabling him to punch his ticket to nationals.”

Mong has maintained a 3.67 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at the University of Washington 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.

Mong joins recent Gatorade Washington Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Zack Munson (2022-23, Sehome High School), Isaac Teeples (2021-22 & 2020-21, Kamiakin High School) and Wil Smith (2019-20, Lewis & Clark 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.

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