

**MERIDIAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE IDAHO BOYS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 13, 2025) — In its 40th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Nate Stadlander** of **Meridian High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Idaho Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Stadlander is the first Gatorade Idaho Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Meridian High School.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes for their success on the field, in the classroom and in the community. The award distinguishes Stadlander as Idaho’s best high school boys cross country athlete, and he joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as Lukas Verzbicas (2009-10 & 2010-11, Carl Sandburg High School, Illinois), Edward Cheserek (2012-13, St. Benedict’s Preparatory School, New Jersey) and Daniel Simmons (2022-23 & 2023-24, American Fork High School, Utah).

The 6-foot-1, 140-pound senior won his second straight IHSAA Class 6A state meet this past season with a time of 14:55.53, breaking the tape 1.8 seconds ahead of his next-closest competitor in leading the Warriors to ninth place as a team. Stadlander also won the Bugtown Invite in a 5K personal-best clocking of 14:46.96 and took second at the Nike Twilight XC Invitational. He was the top Idaho finisher at the Nike Cross Northwest Regional, finishing fifth in 14:58.1 to earn NXN All-Region honors.

Stadlander has volunteered locally assisting with services in association with the youth ministry at his church. He has also donated his time coaching youth basketball in the faith-based Upward Sports organization. “Nate Stadlander enjoyed his best season yet, not only racing to his second consecutive individual state title, but improving his consistency to record top-three finishes at a pair of high-profile invitationals,” said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack.

Stadlander has maintained a 3.94 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to run at Oklahoma State 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 across 12 different high school sports - 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.

Stadlander joins recent Gatorade Idaho Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Landon Heemeyer (2023-24 & 2022-23, Rocky Mountain High School), Luke Athay (2021-22, Idaho Falls High School) and Nathan Green (2020-21, Borah 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, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$5.6 million in grants to winners across more than 2,000 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 Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://www.instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.