

**ANKENY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE IOWA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (February 13, 2025) — In its 40<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Ethan Zuber** of **Ankeny High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Iowa Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Zuber is the second Gatorade Iowa Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Ankeny 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 Zuber as Iowa’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 5-foot-11, 140-pound senior broke the tape at the Class 4A state meet this past season, clocking a time of 15:01.20—that course’s third fastest in history—and leading the Hawks to second place as a team. A back-to-back state champion, Zuber also ran a personal-best 5K time of 14:40.10 at the Marshalltown Bobcat Invitational. He was the state’s top finisher at the Roy Griak Invitational in Minnesota, taking third, and he crossed the line seventh at the NXN Heartland Regional.

Zuber has volunteered locally for food pantries in addition to supporting hospitalized children on behalf of We Finish Together. A member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and a part-time lifeguard, he has also donated his time as a mentor for elementary school students and as a youth sports coach. “Ethan Zuber was at his best in the biggest moments in 2024,” said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. “He defended his state championship in convincing fashion and ran well against tough fields in out-of-state races.”

Zuber has maintained a weighted 4.1 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to run at the University of Missouri 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.

Two-time winner Zuber joins recent Gatorade Iowa Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Jackson Heidesch (2022-23, Dowling Catholic High School), Alex McKane (2021-22, Iowa City West High School) and Nate Mueller (2020-21, Adel-Desoto-Minburn 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](http://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](https://x.com/Gatorade).