

**PHILLIPS ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MASSACHUSETTS 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 **Tam Gavenas** of **Phillips Academy** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Gavenas is the first Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Phillips Academy.

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 Gavenas as Massachusetts’ 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-7, 120-pound senior won the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships this past season with a time of 15:23.90, becoming the state’s first winner at the event since 1997 and breaking the tape four seconds ahead of his next-closest competitor. Gavenas also won the New England Preparatory School Athletic Council Championship with a time of 15:01, leading the Big Blue to second place as a team. The state’s returning Gatorade Boys Cross Country Player of the Year, he set four course records in 2024 and was also named the COROS XC Athlete of the Year.

Gavenas has volunteered locally with the Mass. Audubon Society and founded the Lunar Plexi organization, which completes environmental projects inspired by cross country running. He has also interned with the New York Historical Society. “Tam is the most resilient person I’ve ever met,” said Patrick Rielly, Phillips Academy-Andover head coach. “He welcomes the challenge of a hard training session, a surprise extra rep, the steepest hill and an intense competition. Tam embodies the spirit of the sport. He always brings his best self to races, and in addition to achieving incredible success individually, he’s a consummate teammate.”

Gavenas has maintained an A average in the classroom. He will attend Harvard University this fall, where he will run cross country and track.

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 Gavenas joins recent Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Sam Burgess (2022-23 & 2021-22, Framingham High School) and Loeden Rodrigues (2020-21, Marblehead 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.