

**CHRISTIAN BROTHERS ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE NEW JERSEY 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 **Joe Barrett** of **Christian Brothers Academy** is the **2024-25 Gatorade New Jersey Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Barrett is the second Gatorade New Jersey Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Christian Brothers 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 Barrett as New Jersey'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-3, 165-pound senior won his third straight NJSIAA Non-Public A individual championship this past season with an all-class best time of 15:35.0, breaking the tape 19 seconds ahead of his next-closest competitor and leading the Colts to their third consecutive team championship. Also the the NXN Northeast Regional champion, Barrett was undefeated against in-state competition in 2024. He clocked a 5K personal-best time of 14:36.0 last fall in winning the Shore County Championships.

A talented artist who sketches and designs clothing, Barrett has volunteered locally at the Jon Bon Jovi Soul Kitchen, which serves customers in need as part of its business model. He has also donated his time assisting in various capacities at St. Michael's Church. "Despite a major sickness rearing its head at the absolute worst time at nationals, Joe Barrett lived out a spectacular senior season," said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. "Otherwise unbeaten individually, he powered the Christian Brothers distance crew to victory after team victory as the program remained the gold standard in the Northeast."

Barrett has maintained an A-minus average in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to run at the University of North Carolina 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.

Barrett joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Jimmy Wischusen (2023-24, Union Catholic High School), Micah Lawson (2022-23, Rahway High School), Marco Langon (2021-22, Bridgewater-Raritan High School) and Vidhur Polam (2020-21, South Brunswick 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).