

**CARY ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NORTH CAROLINA 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 **Kavi Gibson** of **Cary Academy** is the **2024-25 Gatorade North Carolina Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Gibson is the second Gatorade North Carolina Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Cary 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 Gibson as North Carolina’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, 115-pound junior took second at the NCISAA Class 4A state meet this past season with a time of 15:11.5, leading the Chargers to the team championship. Gibson finished 11th at the Foot Locker South Regional to earn Second Team All-Region honors as the state’s top runner at the event. The winner of the TISAC Championships last fall, he clocked a 5K personal-best time of 14:42.20—one of his four state-leading sub-15:20 times—to finish second at the adidas XC Challenge.

An avid musician, Gibson has performed locally as part of various cover bands, playing at major venues in free shows for the community. He has also donated his time as a leader of the Wilderness Club at Cary Academy. “Kavi Gibson experienced a breakthrough season, punctuated by the state’s best finish at Foot Locker South” said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. “He lost just once to an in-state foe last fall and seems primed to run the table in 2025.”

Gibson has maintained an A average GPA in the classroom. He will begin his senior year of high school 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.

Gibson joins recent Gatorade North Carolina Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Noah Valyo (2023-24, Athens Drive Magnet High School), Rocky Hansen (2022-23, Christ School), Will Soule (2021-22, Mount Tabor High School) and Murphy Smith (2020-21, Ardrey Kell 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.