

## **CRATER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE OREGON 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 **Tayvon Kitchen** of **Crater High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Oregon Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Kitchen is the third Gatorade Oregon Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Crater 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 Kitchen as Oregon'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 state’s returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 6-foot, 135-pound senior won his second straight OSAA Class 5A state meet this past season with a time of 14:43.3, breaking the tape 6.4 seconds ahead of his next-closest competitor and leading the Comets to a fourth straight team championship. Kitchen also broke the tape at the NXN Northwest Regional championships to qualify for nationals, where he finished 11th at the national NXN final to earn Second Team All-America honors as the state’s top runner at the event. Also a Top 5 finisher at two major regular-season invitationals in California—fifth at the Woodbridge Classic in a personal-best 13:43.50 for three miles and third at the ASICS Clovis Invitational—he clocked a 5K personal-best of 14:23.7 in winning the Crater Twilight Invite.

A member of his school’s National Honor Society, Kitchen has volunteered locally as part of his church community’s Welfare Farm program, which provides humanitarian aid to families in need. He also serves as chair of Crater High School’s School Improvement Committee and its School Design Committee. “Tayvon Kitchen deserves top billing as the state’s premier talent for a second consecutive year, showing up in force at the region’s most consequential meets,” said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. “When the chips were down last fall, he was the guy.”

Kitchen has maintained a weighted 4.26 GPA in the classroom. He remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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 Kitchen joins recent Gatorade Oregon Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Tyrone Gorze (2022-23 & 2021-22, Crater High School) and Cameron Stein (2020-21, Ashland 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).