

**AMERICAN FORK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE UTAH 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 **Kaden Evans** of **American Fork High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Utah Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Evans is the sixth Gatorade Utah Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from American Fork 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 Evans as Utah’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, 135-pound senior won the UHSAA Class 6A state meet this past season with a time of 14:45.5 for three miles, breaking the tape 5.6 seconds ahead of his next-closest competitor and leading the Caveman to second place as a team. A two-time All-State honoree, Evans took eighth at the national NXN Final this past season to earn Second Team All-America recognition. He clocked a 5K personal-best of 14:24.37 in winning the NXN Southwest Regional title.

An avid outdoorsman who especially enjoys mountain biking and hiking, Evans has volunteered locally with the Five.12 Foundation, packing lunches for school-age children in the community facing food insecurity. He has also donated his time to A Child’s Hope Foundation, undertaking construction and repair projects to benefit the Buena Vida Orphanage in Baja California. “Few runners in America enjoyed the success Kaden Evans did this past season, excelling within the nation’s toughest state and deepest region to earn titles in both arenas,” said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. “No one proved himself more battle-tested.”

Evans has maintained a 3.30 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to run at Oklahoma State University 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.

Evans joins recent Gatorade Utah Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Daniel Simmons (2023-24 & 2022-23, American Fork High School), Jefferson McMullin (2021-22, Lehi High School) and Creed Thompson (2020-21, Skyridge 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.