

**ST. JOHNSBURY ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VERMONT 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 **Emmett Johnson** of **St. Johnsbury Academy** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Vermont Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Johnson is the third Gatorade Vermont Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Johnsbury 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 Johnson as Vermont’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-10, 130-pound senior won the Division I state meet with a time of 16:23.80, breaking the tape 12 seconds ahead of the next-closest competitor and leading the Hilltoppers to the state title. Also Caledonian Record Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year, Johnson took 11th at the New England Cross Country Championships with a time of 15:48. He crossed line 32nd at the NXN Northeast Regional with a time of 16:34.50.

A member of the National Honor Society, Johnson has volunteered locally with a nonprofit that maintains community recreational areas. “Emmett was the state’s best runner,” said Derek Martissus, head coach at Essex High School. “There were some others who challenged him at times, but he was best in big races. He developed as the clear No. 1 on one of the strongest Vermont boys teams in years.”

Johnson has maintained an A average in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to run at the University of Massachusetts Amherst 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.

Johnson joins recent Gatorade Vermont Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Porter Hurteau (2023-24, Bellows Free Academy), Matthew Servin (2022-23, Champlain Valley Union High School), Evan Thornton-Sherman (2021-22, St. Johnsbury Academy) and Brady Martisus (2020-21, Essex 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.