

**MERCER ISLAND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WASHINGTON 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 **Owen Powell** of **Mercer Island High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Washington Boys Cross Country Player of the Year**. Powell is the first Gatorade Washington Boys Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Mercer Island 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 Powell as Washington’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, 150-pound senior won his second straight WIAA Class 3A state meet this past season with an all-class best time of 14:44.9, breaking the tape 3.5 seconds ahead of his next-closest competitor and leading the Islanders to their first team championship in 61 years. A Top 3 finisher in 8 of 10 races this past season, Powell took third in the NXN Northwest Regional Championship to qualify for the national NXN Final, where he finished 46th. He clocked a 5K personal-best of 14:40.0 in winning the Nike Hole In The Wall XC Invitational and he also broke the tape in a personal-best 13:30.3 for three miles in the Sweepstakes Boys race at California’s 43rd annual Woodbridge XC Classic.

An avid mountain biker, Powell has volunteered locally through his school’s Rotary Interact Club and its International Club. He has also donated his time speaking to youth running clubs, imparting his insights on training, racing, goal-setting and mental preparation. “Owen Powell grabbed the attention of the prep distance-running ecosystem with an unforgettable, night triumph at the nation’s largest meet [Woodbridge], proving his track excellence carries over to cross country,” said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. “He emerged at the top of the heap in a good year for Evergreen State runners.”

Powell has maintained a 3.67 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to run at the University of Washington 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.

Powell joins recent Gatorade Washington Boys Cross Country Players of the Year Parker Mong (2023-24, Anacortes High School), Zack Munson (2022-23, Sehome High School) and Isaac Teeples (2021-22 & 2020-21, Kamiakin 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.

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