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**AIR ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE COLORADO GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 8, 2015) — In its 30th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Katie Rainsberger of Air Academy High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Colorado Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Rainsberger is the second Gatorade Colorado Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Air Academy High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the racecourse, distinguishes Rainsberger as Colorado's best high school girls cross country runner. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year award to be announced in January, Rainsberger joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Ryan Hall (1999-00, 2000-01, Big Bear HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-10 junior raced to the Class 4A individual state championship this past season with a time of 18:50.3. Rainsberger also won the Nike Cross Nationals Southwest Regional championships in 17:11 and clocked a 17:41 to finish sixth in the nation at the NXN Final. She broke the tape at the Desert Twilight Festival, the Kadet Invitational, the St. Vrain Invitational, the Coronado Invitational, the Arapahoe Invitational and the Region 2 championships in 2014.

Rainsberger has maintained 3.96 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of youth running programs and the Strides for Epilepsy 5K charity race.

"Katie Rainsberger is perhaps the hardest-working yet most balanced student-athlete we have ever seen," said Air Academy assistant coach Lu Sultze. "She comes to practice with a positive energy that elevates the entire team. She's a born leader and teammate, and her talent and determination are unsurpassed."

Rainsberger will begin her 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 that sanction high school 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 high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Rainsberger joins Gatorade Colorado Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Elise Cranny (2013-14 & 2012-13, Niwot High School), Jordyn Colter (2011-12, Cherry Creek High School), Kelsey Lakowske (2010-11 & 2009-10, Boulder High School), Allie McLaughlin (2008-09, Air Academy), and Kaitlin Hanenburg (2007-08, The Classical Academy) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit www.gatorade.com/poy.

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