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**BEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MASSACHUSETTS 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 Erin Dietz of Bedford High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Dietz is the first Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Bedford 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 Dietz as Massachusetts'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, Dietz 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-2 senior raced to a Division 1 individual state championship this past season with a time of 18:19. Also the 2014 Boston Globe Girls' Cross Country All-Scholastic Co-Runner of the Year, Dietz earned fifth place at the Foot Locker Northeast Regional championships, crossing the line in 17:54.4. She qualified for the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships and finished 37th in 19:38.

Dietz has maintained a 96.9 average in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society and her school's American Red Cross club, she has served as employee at Springs Brook Park in association with her town's recreation department.

"Erin Dietz is the most accomplished runner our school has ever produced," said Bedford High head coach Joel Hebert. "No one works harder at practice and no one spends more time preparing for a race. Her dedication is legendary."

Dietz will attend Harvard University this fall, where she will compete in cross country and track and field.

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.

Dietz joins Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Anoush Shehadeh (2013-14, Phillips Academy), Catarina Rocha (2012-13 & 2011-12, Peabody High School), Ariel Beauregard-Breton (2010-11, Deerfield Academy), Andrea Keklak (2009-10, Lincoln-Sudbury Regional), and Emily Jones (2008-09 & 2007-08, The Bromfield School), 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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