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**LINCOLN NORTH STAR HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE NEBRASKA 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 Jeralyn Poe of Lincoln North Star High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Nebraska Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Poe is the first Gatorade Nebraska Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Lincoln North Star 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 Poe as Nebraska'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, Poe 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-4 senior raced to her fourth straight Class A individual state championship this past season with a time of 14:42.6. The state's three-time returning Gatorade Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, Poe was the fastest Nebraska competitor at the Nike Cross Nationals Heartland Regional championships, earning 12th place in 18:04.8. She also finished 18th at the Foot Locker Midwest Regional championships with a time of 18:13. Since the inception of the award in 2007, Poe becomes one of only eight girls distance racers nationwide to claim Gatorade State Cross Country Runner of the Year honors in all four years of high school.

Poe has maintained a 3.97 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, she has volunteered locally on behalf of the Lincoln Children's Museum and her church youth group.

"Jeralyn Poe has been a model of consistency throughout her career at our school," said Lincoln North Star head coach Matt Musiel. "She has proven herself to be among the best if not the best distance runners ever to run in our state."

Poe has verbally committed to an athletic scholarship at Michigan State University beginning 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.

Four-time winner Poe joins Gatorade Nebraska Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Aubree Worden (2010-11 & 2009-10), Kelli Budd (2008-09, Marian), and Emily Sisson (2007-08, Millard North) 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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