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**NEW BRAUNFELS HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE TEXAS 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 Paige Hofstad of New Braunfels High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Texas Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Hofstad is the first Gatorade Texas Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from New Braunfels 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 Hofstad as Texas'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, Hofstad 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 junior was runner-up at the Nike Cross Nationals Final this past season, clocking a time of 17:26. Hofstad also took fourth at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships in 17:33, becoming one of only four prep girls to earn All-American honors in both national title races. She broke the tape at the NXN South Regional championship in 17:26.52 and also won the St. Andrew's Invitational and the Nike South Invitational. Hofstad took second at both the Class 6A state championship meet and at the Foot Locker South Regional championships.

Hofstad has maintained a 3.81 GPA in the classroom. A devoted member of her church community, she has volunteered locally on behalf of multiple community-service initiatives with her school's Key Club.

"Paige's work level equals her talent," said New Braunfels coach Lee Datesman. "She's incredibly gritty and competitive and a very smart racer. She's the toughest distance runner I've ever seen." Hofstad 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.

Hofstad joins Gatorade Texas Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Natalie Rathjen (2013-14, Highland Park High School), Karis Jochen (2012-13 & 2011-12, A&M Consolidated High School), Rachel Johnson (2010-11, Plano Senior High School), and Chelsey Sveinsson (2009-10, 2008-09 & 2007-08, Greenhill 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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