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**LEXINGTON CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE KENTUCKY GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 14, 2016) — In its 31st year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Michaela Reinhart of Lexington Catholic High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Kentucky Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Reinhart is the first Gatorade Kentucky Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Lexington Catholic 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 Reinhart as Kentucky'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, Reinhart 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-3 sophomore raced to the Class 2A individual state championship this past season with a time of 18:03.6, leading the Knights to a third-place finish as a team. A 2015 First Team All-State Selection, Reinhart earned 10th place at the Nike Cross Nationals Southeast championships, crossing the line in 17:50.1.

Reinhart has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Spanish Honor Society and the president of the student council, she has participated on a service mission trip on behalf of her church and has volunteered as a youth track & field coach.

"Michaela Reinhart is a dominant distant runner in Kentucky and has been for several years," said Brian Alessandro, head coach at Highlands High. "I enjoy watching her gutsy performances, especially when racing other elite girls because she task risks and pushes herself to the limit."

Reinhart will begin her junior 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.

Reinhart joins Gatorade Kentucky Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Gabriella Karas (2014-15, Martha Layne Collins High School), Whitney O'Bryan (2013-14, Daviess County High School), Bailey Davis (2012-13, Assumption High School), Cassidy Hale (2011-12, duPont Manual High School), Emma Brink (2010-11, 2009-10 & 2007-08, Sacred Heart Academy), and Kaitlin Snapp (2008-09, Danville High 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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