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**GRANT HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE OREGON 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 Ella Donaghu of Grant High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Oregon Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Donaghu is the first Gatorade Oregon Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Grant 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 Donaghu as Oregon'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, Donaghu 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 third consecutive Class 6A individual state championship this past season, with a course-record time of 17:26. The state's two-time returning Gatorade Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, Donaghu finished second at the Nike Cross Nationals Final in 17:10.2. She also won the Nike Border Clash and the Sundodger Invitational, while finishing third at the NXN Northwest Regional championships.

Donaghu has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. A mentor for younger runners, she has volunteered locally on behalf of a soup kitchen and the Friends First Club, which helps integrate special needs students at her school.

"Ella is the epitome of the scholar-athlete, and she works hard year-round, not just when she feels like it," said Grant coach Doug Winn. "Through her leadership our women's team bonded better than ever before and each runner ran better because of her influence."

Donaghu has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on an athletic scholarship at Stanford 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.

Three-time winner Donaghu joins Gatorade Oregon Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Sara Tsai (2012-13, & 2011-12, South Eugene High School), Annamarie Maag (2010-11 & 2009-10, Jesuit High School), and Taylor Wallace (2008-09 & 2007-08, Henley 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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