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**AIR ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE COLORADO GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 23, 2016) — In its 31<sup>st</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Katie Rainsberger of Air Academy High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Colorado Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Rainsberger is the first Gatorade Colorado Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Air Academy 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 track, distinguishes Rainsberger as Colorado's best high school girls track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Rainsberger joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Allyson Felix (2001-02, Los Angeles Baptist, 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.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt HS, Ia.) and Bianca Knight (2006-07, Ridgeland HS, Miss.).

The state's reigning Gatorade Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, the 5-foot-9 senior won three individual state championships at the Class 4A state meet this past season, leading the Kadets to second place as a team. The Class 4A Athlete of the Year as named collectively by CHSAANow.com, ColoradoPreps.com and MaxPreps, Rainsberger swept the 800-meter run (2:09.97), the 1,600-meter run (4:45.27) and the 3,200-meter run (10:23.24). She also anchored the winning 4x800-meter relay squad that broke the tape in 9:14.28. Her 1,600-meter time of 4:44.31 at the Longmont Invitational as well as her 3,200- and 800-meter clockings at the state meet ranked seventh, 24th and 48th among U.S. prep competitors in 2016, respectively, at the time of her selection.

Rainsberger has maintained a 4.49 weighted GPA in the classroom and represents one of the state's top academic candidates in meeting the Gatorade award's broad criteria. A member of the National Honor Society and sports editor of her school newspaper, she has volunteered locally on behalf of USA Track & Field as well as charity road races. The recipient of the Sportswomen of Colorado 2015 High School Cross Country Award, Rainsberger has also been honored as a student-athlete by Rotary Club International.

"I think her track accolades and what she did at the state track meet this year speak for itself," Fred Marjerrison, head coach at rival Widefield High. "She absolutely dominated four events and put her team in position to capture some team hardware. We were very blessed to see a special talent like Katie and probably will have to wait a long time to see another dominant distance athlete like this young lady."

Rainsberger has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at the University of Oregon 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.

Rainsberger joins recent Gatorade Colorado Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Jordyn Colter (2014-15, Cherry Creek High School), Dior Hall (2013-14, George Washington High School), Ana Holland (2012-13, Regis Jesuit High School), Valarie Allman (2011-12, Silver Creek High School), Dior Hall (2010-11, George Washington High School), Eleanor Fulton (2009-10, Highlands Ranch High School), LaTraia Scott (2008-09, Coronado High School), Emily Blok (2007-08, Conifer High School), and Sarah Cocco (2006-07, Fairview High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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