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RIO RICO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE ARIZONA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (January 23, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Allie Schadler of Rio Rico High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Arizona Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Schadler is the first Gatorade Arizona Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Rio Rico 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 Schadler as Arizona'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/February, Schadler joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Lukas Verzbicas (2010-11, 2009-10 Carl Sandburg, Orland Park, Ill.), Megan Goethals (2009-10, Rochester, Rochester Hills, Mich.), Jordan Hasay (2008-09, Mission College Prep., San Luis Obispo, Calif.) and Chris Derrick (2007-08, Neuqua Valley, Naperville, Ill.).

The 5-foot-5 senior raced to the Division 3 individual state championship this past season with a course-record time of 17:03. The state's returning Gatorade Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, Schadler finished seventh nationally at the Nike Cross Nationals Final in 17:48.6, earning All-American honors in the process. She won the Desert Twilight Festival, the Rio Rico Rattler Invitational and the rated varsity race at the Woodbridge Classic, while finishing second at the NXN Southwest Regional championships.

A devoted member of her church community, Schadler has volunteered locally on behalf of the Interact Club and youth sports programs. "Allie Schadler is a tenacious and ferocious competitor," said Jeff Messer, head coach at Desert Vista High. "She's a phenomenal athlete and she's also a wonderful young lady and teammate. She competed against the finest female distance runners in the country and she always challenged them throughout every step of every race."

Schadler has maintained a 4.50 weighted GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in cross country and track and field on scholarship at the University of Washington 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 Player of the Year Selection Committee, 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.

Two time-winner Schadler joins Gatorade Arizona Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Dani Jones (2014-15 & 2013-14, Desert Vista High School), Sarah Fakler (2012-13 2011-12 & 2010-11, Xavier College Prep.), Jessica Tonn (2009-10 & 2008-09, Xavier College Prep.), and Nadya Bishton (2007-08, Mountain Ridge High School) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Schadler will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

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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