

CHEYENNE EAST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE WYOMING GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (January 21, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Maggie Madsen of Cheyenne East High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Wyoming Girls Cross Country Player of the Year.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation's best high school athletes for their excellence in sport, academics and community. The award recognizes Madsen as Wyoming's best high school girls cross country athlete, and she joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Jordan Hasay (2008-09, Mission College Preparatory Catholic High School, CA), Katelyn Tuohy (2017-18, 2018-19 & 2019-20, North Rockland High School, NY) and Jane Hedengren (2024-25, Timpview High School, UT).

The 5-foot-6 junior won the Class 4A state meet by a striking 45.7-second margin this past season, leading the Thunderbirds to a top-10 finish as a team. Madsen also clocked a personal-best time of 17:15.4 at the NXN Northwest Regionals to earn Second Team All-Region honors. The state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, she is a three-time All-State selection in cross country and she's won seven indoor and outdoor 4A state championships since 2023.

A member of the Cheyenne Mayor's Youth Council, Madsen has volunteered locally on behalf of the Cheyenne Youth Day of Giving, the Greenway Cleanup, the Botanic Gardens and Needs Inc. She has also donated her time to Cheyenne Animal Shelter, Paul Smith Children's Village and Empowering Youth in Cambodia in addition to serving as a track meet assistant and fundraising for Friday Food Bags. "Maggie Madsen remains the class of Wyoming on the girls' side of the cross country ledger," said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. "Despite battling a hip flexor injury, she PR'd twice this past season at 5K and seems poised for an even more decorated senior campaign."

Madsen has maintained a weighted 4.17 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school this fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one state winner from each of the 50 states and Washington D.C., in 12 different sports: football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, baseball, softball, boys and girls soccer, and boys and girls track & field. In total, 610 high school athletes are honored each year. From the pool of state winners, one national winner is selected in each of the 12 sports. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the winners in each sport.

As part of Gatorade's commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$6.4 million in grants to winners across more than 2,200 organizations.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit playeroftheyear.gatorade.com or follow us on social media on Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://www.instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X(Twitter) at [x.com/Gatorade](https://www.x.com/Gatorade).

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