

**MID-PRAIRIE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE IOWA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 28, 2019) — In its 34<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Marie Hostetler of Mid-Prairie High School as its 2018-19 Gatorade Iowa Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Hostetler is the second Gatorade Iowa Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Mid-Prairie 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 Hostetler as Iowa'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 February, Hostetler joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Lukas Verzbicas (2010-11, 2009-10 Carl Sandburg High School, Orland Park, Ill.), Megan Goethals (2009-10, Rochester High School, Rochester Hills, Mich.), Jordan Hasay (2008-09, Mission College Preparatory Catholic High School, San Luis Obispo, Calif.) and Chris Derrick (2007-08, Neuqua Valley High School, Naperville, Ill.).

The state's returning Gatorade Runner of the Year, the 5-foot-8 junior won the Class 2A state meet for a second straight year this past season with a time of 18:02.1, breaking the tape 5.3 seconds ahead of her next-closest competitor and leading the Golden Hawks to a second consecutive team title. Hostetler was the top Iowa runner at the Nike Cross Nationals Heartland Regional championships, finishing 10th. She won five of eight races on the season.

A student leader of her local chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Hostetler also works daily on her family's dairy farm. She has volunteered locally with the Special Olympics and as a youth running coach. "Marie made a statement at the state meet," said Lucas Gourley, head coach of Danville High School. "Watching her early on in the race you knew that she was in control. She was determined to win."

Hostetler has maintained a 4.0 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 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 Hostetler joins Gatorade Iowa Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Anna Hostetler (2016-17, Mid-Prairie High School), McKenzie Yanek (2015-16, Pleasant Valley High School), Jordyn Kleve (2014-15, Johnston High School), and Rebekah Topham (2013-14, Griswold High School) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Hostetler has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of her choosing. She is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit [www.Gatorade.com/POY](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).