

**BELLARMINE PREP STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE WASHINGTON 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 Ella Borsheim of Bellarmine Prep as its 2018-19 Gatorade Washington Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Borsheim is the first Gatorade Washington Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Bellarmine Prep.

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 Borsheim as Washington'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, Borsheim 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 5-foot-4 freshman raced to the Class 4A individual state championship this past season with a time of 17:36.1. Borsheim also broke the tape at the Richland Invitational, the Nike BorderClash and the Nike Portland XC Invitational. She took third at the Nike Cross Nationals Northwest Regional championships.

Borsheim has volunteered locally as an elementary school tutor. "Ella is a fantastic young runner," said Bellarmine Prep coach Matt Ellis. "She's very coachable and extremely self-motivated. More importantly, she's most interested in the success of her teammates and the team overall."

Borsheim has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her sophomore 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.

Borsheim joins Gatorade Washington Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Katie Thronson (2017-18, Lewis and Clark High School), Jordan Oakes (2016-17 & 2015-16, Holy Names Academy), Lindsey Bradley (2014-15, Richland High School), and Alexa Efraimson (2013-14, Camas 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," Borsheim 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).