

**BISHOP CARROLL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE
NAMED GATORADE KANSAS GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE
YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 27, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Hope Jackson of Bishop Carroll Catholic High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Kansas Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year**. Jackson is the first Gatorade Kansas Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Bishop Carroll Catholic 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 field, distinguishes Jackson as Kansas'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, Jackson 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-6 sophomore distance talent won the KSHSAA Cross Country Championships Class 5A state title this past season, breaking the tape in 18:17.90—30.2 seconds ahead of her next-closest competitor—and leading the Golden Eagles to a fifth-place finish as a team. She won all seven races she ran last fall, including the Rim Rock Classic Varsity Gold Race with a time of 18:31.40, and she owns the fastest girls 5K clocking in school history in addition to five of the top 10.

A Sophomore Leader at Bishop Carroll, Jackson has volunteered locally at a homeless shelter and on behalf of the Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, where she has served as a teacher's assistant and a Master Server during mass. She has also donated her time to the Prairie Fire Marathon in Wichita. "Hope is incredibly humble, yet driven," said Cory Swords, the Golden Eagles' head coach. "Her attention to detail and adherence to our teams' principle of doing things right all the time has made her a model and a leader for every athlete on her team, both male and female. Her tireless work effort, commitment to excellence, and willingness to endure the discipline and pain tolerance involved in pursuing excellence in her sport is a testament to her extraordinary character as an athlete and person. I can't think of an athlete who I have had the pleasure of coaching over the last 20 years who has been more deserving of this award."

Jackson has maintained a 4.17 weighted GPA in the classroom. She will begin her junior 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 and field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Jackson joins recent Gatorade Kansas Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year Jaybe Shufelberger (2018-19, Washburn Rural High School), Olivia Sovereign (2017-18, Saint Thomas Aquinas High School), Molly Born (2016-17, Shawnee Mission Northwest High School), and Cailie Logue (2015-16 & 2014-15, Girard High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Jackson 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, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

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