

**NEWTON SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MASSACHUSETTS 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 **Lucy Jenks of Newton South High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year**. Jenks is the first Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Newton South 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 Jenks as Massachusetts'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, Jenks 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-5 senior won the Division 1 state meet this past season with a time of 18:53, breaking the tape 16 seconds ahead of her next-closest competitor. In her first year running cross country, Jenks missed the first half of the season with patellar tendinitis before returning to win the Dual County League Championships and the Division 1 Eastern Division Championships. She placed fifth at the Nike Cross Nationals Northeast Regional championships and was 112th at the NXN Final.

Jenks has volunteered locally at a homeless shelter, and she donated her time as an office assistant for a professional tutoring service. "Lucy is a phenomenal runner," said Hanna Bruno, head coach of Concord-Carlisle High. "She was able to accomplish her success this season without having had cross country experience or race conditioning."

Jenks has maintained a weighted 4.63 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at Stanford University 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.

Jenks joins recent Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year Grace Connolly (2018-19, 2017-18 & 2016-17, Natick High School), Ariel Keklak (2015-16, Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School) and Erin Dietz (2014-15, Bedford High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Jenks 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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