

**SCIENCE HILL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE TENNESSEE 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 **Jenna Hutchins of Science Hill High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Tennessee Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year**. Hutchins is the first Gatorade Tennessee Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Science Hill 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 Hutchins as Tennessee'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, Hutchins 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 sophomore won the Foot Locker Southeast Regional championships this past season with a time of 16:54, breaking the tape one second ahead of her next-closest competitor and was the state's 2018-19 Gatorade Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Hutchins later earned All-American status for a second straight year at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships with a fifth-place finish. She was ill during the Division 1 Large School State Meet, but still managed to cross the line in third.

An accomplished violinist, Hutchins has volunteered locally at the Johnson City Public Library and as a youth running coach. "Jenna has a great work ethic," said Frankie Nunn, head coach of Tennessee High. "Also, she has what I call the Triple Ds: discipline, dedication and determination. She puts in the hard work to do what it takes to be at the top."

Hutchins has maintained a 4.0 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.

Hutchins joins recent Gatorade Tennessee Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year Sasha Neglia (2018-19 & 2017-18, Dobyns-Bennett High School), Rebecca Story (2016-17, Christian Academy of Knoxville), and Taylor Cuneo (2015-16 & 2014-15, Central Magnet School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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