

**REEDY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE TEXAS 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 **Colleen Stegmann of Reedy High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Texas Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year**. Stegmann is the first Gatorade Texas Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Reedy 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 Stegmann as Texas'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, Stegmann 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-3 junior raced to the Class 5A individual state championship this past season with a time of 17:17.1. Stegmann also broke the tape at the Region 2 championships and the District 9 championships, while placing second at the McNeil Invitational and the Southlake Carroll Invitational. She took second at the Nike Cross Nationals South Regional championships and was 37th nationally at the Nike Cross Nationals Finals.

Stegmann has volunteered locally on behalf of Best Buddies International, the National Charity League and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. "Colleen has waited patiently for her moment and this year it all came together," said Reedy coach Lauren Watts. "Everything that she has accomplished has been through hard work and her passion for the sport."

Stegmann has maintained a 3.97 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 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.

Stegmann joins recent Gatorade Texas Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year London Culbreath (2018-19, 2017-18, & 2016-17, McKinney North High School), Abby Gray (2015-16, Alamo Heights High School) and Paige Hofstad (2014-15, New Braunfels High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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

###