

**MID-PRAIRIE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE IOWA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (April 8, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Danielle Hostetler of Mid-Prairie High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Iowa Girls Cross Country Player of the Year. Hostetler is the third Gatorade Iowa Girls Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Mid-Prairie 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 Hostetler as Iowa's best high school girls cross country player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Cross Country Player of the Year award to be announced in April, Hostetler joins an elite alumni association of 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 won the Class 2A state meet this past season with a time of 19:08.9, breaking the tape 22.4 seconds ahead of her next-closest competitor. Undefeated in seven races, Hostetler injured her hip in the first race of the season and ran with pain the rest of the year. She is the younger sister of former Gatorade State Players of the Year, Anna and Marie Hostetler.

Hostetler works every day on her family's dairy farm. She has sent care packages to soldiers overseas and has volunteered locally as part of multiple community service initiatives through her church youth group. "Danielle is obviously a talented athlete and dedicated to her training," said Eric Walsh, head coach of Tipton High. "She attacks the course and runs from the front the whole race. She dares her competition to catch her and they never do."

Hostetler, who is home-schooled, has maintained a 3.86 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 works with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Hostetler joins recent Gatorade Iowa Girls Cross Country Players of the Year Marie Hostetler (2019-20, 2018-2019 & 2017-2018, Mid-Prairie High School) and Anna Hostetler (2016-17, Mid-Prairie High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Hostetler has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Hostetler is also eligible to submit a 30-second video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$2.7 million across 1,117 organizations.

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.playeroftheyear.gatorade.com, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

###