

**HELLGATE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MONTANA 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 Kensey May of Hellgate High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Montana Girls Cross Country Player of the Year. May is the first Gatorade Montana Girls Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Hellgate 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 May as Montana'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, May 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-7 junior won the Class AA state meet this past season with a time of 19:21.03, breaking the tape 5.85 seconds ahead of her next-closest competitor and leading the Knights to a second place finish as a team. May produced two first place and three runner-up finishes in six races this season. She was the 2019 Virginia Class 1 state cross country champion as a sophomore while attending Parry McCluer High.

May has volunteered locally as part of multiple community service initiatives through her church. "It was amazing to watch Kensey move to a team like Hellgate and flourish as a runner and teammate," said Anders Brooker, head coach of Hellgate High School. "She continued to get better each week."

May has maintained a 4.0 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 & 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.

May joins recent Gatorade Montana Girls Cross Country Players of the Year Kylie Hartnett (2019-20, Helena High School), Tiahna Vladic (2018-19 & 2016-17, Billings Senior High School) and Camila Noe (2017-18, Bozeman High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," May has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. May 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.

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