

**SPRING CREEK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE NEVADA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 10, 2021) — In its 36<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Kendra Lusk of Spring Creek High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Nevada Girls Cross Country Player of the Year. Lusk is the first Gatorade Nevada Girls Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Spring Creek 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 Lusk as Nevada's best high school girls cross country player. Lusk 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-9 senior won the Class 3A Northern Region championship this past season with a time of 19:11. The Class 3A state champion as a junior, Lusk was undefeated in 2020-21, including a victory at the Lowry Invitational.

A member of her school's student council, Lusk has volunteered locally on behalf of a food pantry, a homeless shelter, an elder care facility and youth track programs. "Kendra is an incredibly hardworking young woman who has led our team for four years," said Spring Creek coach Todd Mahlke. "She won every race she competed in this spring, most by over one minute, but she is an incredibly humble person who puts team accomplishments before her personal success."

Lusk has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in cross country and track and field on scholarship at Montana State 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 & 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 work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Lusk joins recent Gatorade Nevada Girls Cross Country Players of the Year Penelope Smerdon (2019-20, Reno High School), Carissa Buchholz (2018-19, South Lake Tahoe High School), Alexis Melendrez (2017-18, Spanish Springs High School), and Samantha King-Shaw (2016-17, Reed High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Lusk has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Lusk 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.Gatorade.com/POY](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](https://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

###

