

**SOMERS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE CONNECTICUT GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 24, 2022) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Rachel St. Germain** of **Somers High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Connecticut Girls Cross Country Player of the Year**. St. Germain is the first Gatorade Connecticut Girls Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Somers 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 St. Germain as Connecticut'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 February, St. Germain 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-2 senior raced to the State Open individual championship this past season with a time of 18:02. St. Germain also broke the tape at the Class S state meet in 18:42, leading the Spartans to the state championship as a team. She also won the Wickham Park Invitational, the Stratton Brook Invitational and the Winding Trails Invitational, and placed second at the New England Championships.

A member of her school's Class Act Committee, St. Germain has volunteered locally on behalf of the town library, clothing drives for the needy and a youth running program. "This year not only did Rachel accomplish her goals, but she surpassed them," said Somers High School coach Michael Szafir. "She became a Connecticut state champion and finished second in the New England race, which is a big deal for anyone, but is not often done by a runner from a small school."

St. Germain has maintained an A average in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to run at Quinnipiac 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

St. Germain joins recent Gatorade Connecticut Girls Cross Country Players of the Year Kate Wiser (2020-21, Pomperaug High School), Sydney Masciarelli (2019-20 & 2018-19, Marianapolis Preparatory School, and Morgan McCormick (2017-18, Wilton High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, St. Germain has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. St. Germain is also eligible to submit a short 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 \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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