

**OLATHE NORTH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE KANSAS 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 **Anjali Hocker Singh** of **Olathe North High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Kansas Girls Cross Country Player of the Year**. Hocker Singh is the first Gatorade Kansas Girls Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Olathe North 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 Hocker Singh as Kansas' 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, Hocker Singh 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-3 sophomore distance talent broke the tape at the Kansas State HS 6A State Championships this past season, clocking an all-class best time of 17:45.60 for 5K and leading the Eagles to second place as a team. Unbeaten against in-state competition during the 2021 campaign, Hocker Singh took fourth at the NXR Heartland Regional Championships and finished 12th at Eastbay Midwest Region Cross Country Championships. Her time at NXR was a personal-best 17:11.50 and ranked as the state's fastest girls clocking in 2021. A 6A All-State and Milesplit Kansas All-Class Team selection, she was the state's top finisher (fourth overall) at the prestigious Roy Griak Invitational in Minnesota and concluded the season rated No. 62 in Dyestat's national Top 100 Rankings.

A member of her school's Feminist Club, Black Student Union chapter and DECA, Hocker Singh has also played in the marching band. She has volunteered locally in association with her church congregation and on behalf of the community arboretum in addition to donating her time to area fun runs. "Anjali is an excellent choice for this award," said Bishop Carroll Catholic head coach Cory Swords. "She had an outstanding season. From an opposing coach's perspective, I feel one thing that makes her great is she seems so unflappable. She's always focused and composed, not willing to let the course, conditions or competition dictate any part of her race. When you can do that, you're going to succeed more often than not."

Hocker Singh has maintained a 4.0 cumulative GPA in the classroom, which ranks No. 1 in her class, and her 4.57 weighted GPA ranks second. She will begin her junior 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Hocker Singh joins recent Gatorade Kansas Girls Cross Country Players of the Year Taylor Briggs (2020-21, Chapman High School), Hope Jackson (2019-20, Bishop Carroll Catholic High School), Jaybe Shufelberger (2018-19, Washburn Rural High School), and Olivia Sovereign (2017-18, Saint Thomas Aquinas 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, Hocker Singh 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. Hocker Singh 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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