

**MOON AREA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE PENNSYLVANIA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (January 24, 2022) — In its 37<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Mia Cochran** of **Moon Area High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Cross Country Player of the Year**. Cochran is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Moon Area 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 Cochran as Pennsylvania'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, Cochran 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 senior raced to the Class AAA individual state championship this past season with a time of 18:08.5. The state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year in girls cross country, Cochran also won the District 7 championship and the Red, White & Blue Classic. She took ninth at the Eastbay Northeast Regional Championships and eighth at the national Eastbay Cross Country Championships, earning All-American honors in the process.

Cochran has donated her time as a tutor for younger children and has volunteered locally on behalf of the Key Club and the Miracle League of Moon Township. "When she 'flips the switch' to a running mentality, there is nothing that can stop Mia Cochran from achieving whatever she puts her mind to," said Moon Area High School coach Tim Hrivnak. "I've never been around an athlete who trains with such focus. To me, that is Mia's greatest strength."

Cochran has maintained a 3.91 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at the University of Arkansas 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.

Two-time winner Cochran joins recent Gatorade Pennsylvania Girls Cross Country Player of the Year Marlee Starliper (2019-20, 2018-19, & 2017-18, Northern 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, Cochran 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. Cochran 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY), Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade) and Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).

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