

**MADISON CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE KENTUCKY GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 30, 2022) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Ciara O'Shea** of **Madison Central High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Kentucky Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. O'Shea is the first Gatorade Kentucky Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Madison Central 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 O'Shea as Kentucky's best high school girls track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Track & Field Player of the Year award to be announced in July, O'Shea joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt High School, Iowa), Allyson Felix (2002-03, Los Angeles Baptist High School, Calif.), Robert Griffin III (2006-07, Copperas Cove High School, Texas), Grant Fisher (2014-15 & 2013-14, Grand Blanc High School, Mich.) and Candace Hill (2014-15, Rockdale County High School, Ga.).

A three-time Kentucky Gatorade Girls Cross Country Player of the Year, the 5-foot-2 junior swept the 1,600-meter and 3,200-meter runs at the Class 3A state meet this past season, leading the Indians to a fifth-place finish as a team. O'Shea set a state record in the 1,600 with her time of 4:52.67, and her finish in the 3,200 came in a meet record 10:32.83. She earned All-American honors by placing sixth in the 2-mile run at the New Balance Nationals Outdoor, clocking a 10:17.34, which, at the time of her selection, ranked No. 19 nationally among prep girls competitors in 2022.

O'Shea has volunteered locally on behalf of food drives to benefit the needy and at a nearby retirement community. She has also donated her time as a youth tutor and as part of multiple community service initiatives through her church youth group. "Ciara is not only a talented runner and fierce competitor, she is just an all-around, great student-athlete," said Jason Moncer, head coach of West Jessamine High School. "Ciara trains hard and competes at a different level. Her times have all gotten better."

O'Shea has maintained a weighted 4.35 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

O'Shea joins recent Gatorade Kentucky Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Sophie Galloway (2020-21, Marshall County High School and 2019-20, 2018-19, & 2017-18, Graves County 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, O'Shea 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. O'Shea 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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