

**NASHUA SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE NEW HAMPSHIRE GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 30, 2022) — In its 37<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Soraya Ross** of **Nashua South High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade New Hampshire Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Ross is the first Gatorade New Hampshire Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Nashua South 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 Ross as New Hampshire'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, Ross 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.).

The 5-foot-4 sophomore won two individual events and anchored the winning 4x100-meter relay at the Division 1 state meet this past season. Ross broke the tape in the 100-meter dash in a meet-record time of 12.19, also winning the 200 in 25.79 and leading the 4x100 quartet in another meet-record time of 49.29. In addition, she captured the same three events at the Meet of Champions and took fourth in the 100 at the New England Interscholastic Championships.

Also a soccer standout, Ross is a member of her school's Student Leadership Council and has volunteered locally on behalf of youth track programs. "Soraya is a unique athlete with a gift of top-end speed like we had never seen before," said Nashua South coach Catrina Lougee. "The New Hampshire Track and Field community has nicknamed her 'The Closer' because she doesn't have the best start, but she can really close races and bring excitement to the sport."

Ross has maintained a weighted 4.50 GPA in the classroom. 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.

Ross joins recent Gatorade New Hampshire Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Addison Cox (2020-21, Coe-Brown Northwood Academy), Caroline Fischer (2019-20, Bishop Guertin High School), Grace Devanny (2018-19, Concord High School), and Jacqueline Gaughan (2017-18, Exeter 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, Ross 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. Ross 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).