

**BALLARD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE IOWA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 23, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Paityn Noe** of **Ballard High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Iowa Girls Cross Country Player of the Year**. Noe is the first Gatorade Iowa Girls Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Ballard 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 Noe as Iowa'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 January, Noe joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners, including Natalie Cook (2021-22, Flower Mound High School, Flower Mound, Texas), Katelyn Tuohy (2019-20, North Rockland High School, Thiels, N.Y.), Megan Goethals (2009-10, Rochester High School, Rochester Hills, Mich.) and Jordan Hasay (2008-09, Mission College Preparatory Catholic High School, San Luis Obispo, Calif.).

The 5-foot-4 senior won the Class 3A state meet this past season with a time of 16:48.58, leading the Bombers to a second-place finish as a team. Noe won eight races, including the Fort Dodge Invitational and Heartland Classic. She also placed second at the Roy Griak Invitational in Minnesota. Following her record-setting performance at the state final, Noe finished in the top three at both the Nike Heartland Regional Championships and the Champs Sports Midwest Regional Championships to advance to a pair of national finals. She was 10th at Nike Cross Nationals and took third at the Champs Sports National Championships, earning All-America honors at both events.

Noe is a member of the National Honor Society and has been involved in numerous volunteer efforts through her local 4-H group, including a significant clean-up effort after a derecho storm in Huxley and surrounding towns left the community without power for a week. She has also been an active member of her youth group at Lutheran Church of Hope, serving and delivering meals for the homeless, coordinating personal care and food donations, and participating in group and music leadership for vacation bible school. "Paityn Noe delivered one of the most exceptional efforts in the history of the Iowa state final with her record-setting 16:48.58 clocking at Lakeside Municipal Golf Course, which was merely an indication of her outstanding potential during the postseason," said Erik Boal, an editor for DyeStat.com. "She followed that powerful performance by becoming one of only three female athletes in the country to earn All-America honors at a pair of national finals, finishing third at the Champs Sports National Championships in San Diego."

Noe has maintained a weighted 4.05 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.

Noe joins recent Gatorade Iowa Girls Cross Country Players of the Year Addison Dorenkamp (2021-22, Valley High School), Danielle Hostetler (2020-21, Mid-Prairie High School), and Marie Hostetler (2019-20 & 2018-19, Mid-Prairie High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Being a Gatorade Player of the Year means paying it forward for the next generation. Through Gatorade's Play it Forward initiative, every Player of the Year receives a grant to give to one of Gatorade's social impact partners, supporting Gatorade's ambition to fuel the future of sport. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

For nearly 40 years, Gatorade has honored high school athletes at the top of their game as teammates, supporting their communities and achieving academic success. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes and community leaders, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport.

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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