

**ORONO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MAINE 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 **Ruth White** of **Orono High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Maine Girls Cross Country Player of the Year**. White is the second Gatorade Maine Girls Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Orono 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 White as Maine'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, White 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 state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 4-foot-8 junior won the Class C state title for a second straight time this past season, clocking an 18:02.52 and leading the Riots to back-to-back championships as a team. White won nine races, including repeat victories at the Maine Festival of Champions and the New England Cross Country Championships. She also finished fourth at the Champs Sports Northeast Regional Championships and took 17th in her debut at the Champs Sports National Championships.

A member of the National Honor Society and Spanish National Honor Society, White is the president of the Orono High School Key Club. She has volunteered locally as a coach with the Orono Track Club USATF Youth Program and the Orono Youth Ski Farm Program, relying on her extensive experience as a competitive Nordic skier. "Ruth White continued to showcase why she is one of the elite competitors in Maine prep history, securing another Class C state title and repeating as the New England Championships winner," said Erik Boal, an editor for DyeStat.com. "She qualified for her first national final and placed in the top 20 at the Champs Sports Championships in San Diego."

White has maintained an A average 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.

Two-time winner White joins recent Gatorade Maine Girls Cross Country Player of the Year Sofie Matson (2020-21, 2019-20, & 2018-19, Falmouth 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.