

**LAFAYETTE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MISSOURI 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 **Grace Tyson** of **Lafayette High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Missouri Girls Cross Country Player of the Year**. Tyson is the first Gatorade Missouri Girls Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Lafayette 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 Tyson as Missouri'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, Tyson 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-7 senior raced to the Class 5 individual state championship this past season with a time of 18:10.5, leading the Lancers to the state title as a team. She also won the Forest Park Invitational, Memphis Twilight Classic and Fort Zumwalt North Invitational.

A member of the National Honor Society, Student Council, Key Club and Fall Sports Leadership Program, Tyson has also donated her time to her school and in the surrounding community in several ways, including as a swim coach. She has also worked at the STL Food Bank, participated in the Adopt-A-Family Program with her local church, served as a Special Olympics leader and helped wrap Christmas gifts for kids as part of Lafayette High School's STUCO program. "Grace Tyson's journey to repeating as Class 5 state champion was one of the most inspirational comeback stories in the country this season," said Erik Boal, an editor for DyeStat.com. "She returned after being sidelined for seven weeks with a stress fracture in her foot to not only secure the title, but also produce the fastest time across all classifications at the meet."

Tyson has maintained a 4.22 weighted GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at Indiana University 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.

Tyson joins recent Gatorade Missouri Girls Cross Country Players of the Year Julia Ray (2021-22, MICDS), Ally Kruger (2020-21, Liberty High School), Carolyn Ford (2019-20, Rock Bridge High School), and Ginger Murnieks (2018-19, Lee's Summit West 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.