

**LINCOLN EAST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE NEBRASKA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (January 23, 2023) — In its 38<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Mia Murray** of **Lincoln East High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Nebraska Girls Cross Country Player of the Year**. Murray is the second Gatorade Nebraska Girls Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Lincoln East 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 Murray as Nebraska'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, Murray 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-5 junior raced to the Class A individual state championship this past season with a time of 18:23.4, leading the Spartans to the state title as a team. Murray also won the Titan Classic, Harold Scott Invitational, Nebraska-Kearney Invitational and the Lincoln Public School Championships along with taking second in the Millard South Invitational. She improved by more than 20 seconds from last season in her return to the Nike Heartland Regional Championships in South Dakota, finishing 32nd.

Murray has volunteered locally with the St. Luke's Catholic Church Youth Group, including at homeless shelters, nursing homes and on behalf of youth activities at the church. She has also served as a volunteer coach for the Lincoln Community Track Club and has donated her time as a mentor at the Lincoln East Youth Track clinic. "Mia Murray was the only Nebraska girl in any classification to run under 18:30 at the state meet," said Erik Boal, an editor for DyeStat.com. "She improved by more than a minute from her eighth-place effort at last year's final to lead Lincoln East to a team title."

Murray has maintained a 4.05 weighted 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.

Murray joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Girls Cross Country Players of the Year Elli Dahl (2021-22, Fremont High School), Stella Miner (2020-21, Marian High School), Berlyn Schutz (2019-20, Lincoln East High School), and Kaylie Crews (2018-19, Papillion-La Vista South 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](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).

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