

**ORONO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MAINE GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (January 22, 2024) — In its 39<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Ruth White** of **Orono High School** is the **2023-24 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 celebrates the nation’s top high school athletes for excellence on the field, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes White as Maine’s best high school girls cross country player. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport, touting an all-star group of alumni that includes Irene Riggs (2022-23, 2021-22 & 2020-21, Morgantown High School, Morgantown, W. Va.), Katelyn Tuohy (2019-20, 2018-19 & 2017-18, North Rockland High School, Thiels, N.Y.) and Jordan Hasay (2008-09, Mission College Preparatory Catholic High School, San Luis Obispo, Calif.).

A three-time Gatorade State Cross Country Player of the Year, the 4-foot-8 senior earned First Team All-American honors by crossing the line in sixth at the Foot Locker Cross Country Championships this past season. White won the Class C state meet with a time of 16:57.95, breaking the tape 25 seconds ahead of her next-closest competitor and leading the Riots to the team title. The 2022-23 Gatorade Maine Girls Track & Field Player of the Year, she also won the New England Championships and finished third at the Foot Locker Northeast Regional Championships.

White is her school’s Key Club president and has organized both volunteer efforts in her own community and coordinated broader service initiatives with other local schools. She’s also an American Red Cross certified lifeguard. She has donated her time as a coach for both the Orono Track Club and Orono Youth Ski Farm Program as well. “Ruth is, without question, the best high school distance runner to come through Maine in the last 20 years or more,” said Roger Huber, head coach of Bangor High School. “She has set the standard both in terms of achievement and consistency. Every race seems better than the last, with little or no plateau.”

White has maintained an A average in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at Boise State 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.

Three-time winner White joins recent Gatorade Maine Girls Cross Country Players of the Year Sofie Matson (2020-21 & 2019-20, Falmouth High School), among the state’s list of former award winners.

As part of Gatorade’s commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners’ grants have totaled more than \$4.9 million across more than 1,600 organizations.

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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