

**WILLIAMSTOWN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WEST VIRGINIA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 22, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Alyssa Sauro** of **Williamstown High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade West Virginia Girls Cross Country Player of the Year**. Sauro is the first Gatorade West Virginia Girls Cross Country Player of the Year to be chosen from Williamstown 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 Sauro as West Virginia’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.)

The 5-foot junior won the Class A state meet this past season, breaking the tape in an all-class best time of 17:59.62—29 seconds ahead of her next-closest competitor—and leading the Yellow Jackets to the state team championship. Sauro was the state’s top runner at the Foot Locker South Region championships, where she finished 12th. She won six races in 2023, took second in two others and was the state’s fastest prep girl in every meet she entered.

An active member of the Cross Roads United Methodist Church youth group, Sauro has volunteered locally writing personal notes throughout the year to the elderly and sick in her community. “Alyssa Sauro won her second consecutive Class A state title and no prep girl was faster that day,” said Rich Gonzalez. “She was the state’s best every time she toed the line.”

Sauro has maintained a 4.14 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.

Sauro joins recent Gatorade West Virginia Girls Cross Country Players of the Year Irene Riggs (2022-23, 2021-22, & 2020-21, Morgantown High School) and Lea Hatcher (2019-20, Morgantown 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 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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