

**FOREST LAKE AREA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MINNESOTA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 16, 2025) — In its 40th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Norah Hushagen** of **Forest Lake Area High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Minnesota Girls Cross Country Player of the Year**. Hushagen is the first Gatorade Minnesota **Girls Cross Country** Player of the Year to be chosen from Forest Lake Area High School.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes for their success on the field, in the classroom and in the community. The award distinguishes Hushagen as Minnesota’s best high school girls cross country athlete, and she joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as Jordan Hasay (2008-09, Mission College Preparatory Catholic High School, Ca.), Katelyn Tuohy (2017-18, 2018-19 & 2019-20, North Rockland High School, N.Y.) and Addison Ritzenhein (2023-24, Niwot High School, Co.).

The 5-foot-7 senior took 12th at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships this past season, crossing the line with a time of 18:08.90 to earn Third Team All-American honors. Hushagen captured bronze at the Foot Locker Midwest Regional, securing First Team All-Region recognition as the state’s top prep girls finisher in 17:27.00. She also won the Class 3A state meet last fall, leading the Rangers to second place as a team. She finished 8th at the NXN Heartland Regional to garner Second Team All-Region honors, and she broke the tape at the Suburban East Championships with a personal-best time of 17:04.10.

A cellist in the audition-only Sinfonia Orchestra since sixth grade, Hushagen serves as chair of her school’s Environmental Club. Also active in her church community, she has volunteered locally on behalf of One Warm Coat, the Columbus Elementary Art and Academic Fair, the school district’s Education Center, the North Anoka County Emergency Food Shelf & Closet and the Scandia Farmers Market. She has also donated her time at road races and youth track meets in addition to serving as a Nordic ski coach through MyXC Ski and as a peer math tutor. “Hushagen was the class of Minnesota last fall,” said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. “She outperformed all comers and ran just as impressively after the state meet at regionals and nationals.”

Hushagen has maintained a weighted 3.91 GPA in the classroom. She remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states across 12 different high school sports – 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 Hushagen joins recent Gatorade Minnesota Girls Cross Country Players of the Year Abbey Nechanicky (2022-23, Wayzata High School), Ali Weimer (2021-22, St. Michael-Albertville High School) and Analee Weaver (2020-21, Stillwater Area 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, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$5.6 million in grants to winners across more than 2,000 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 Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://www.instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.

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