

**O'GORMAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE SOUTH DAKOTA 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 **Libby Castelli** of **O'Gorman High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade South Dakota Girls Cross Country Player of the Year**. Castelli is the third Gatorade South Dakota **Girls Cross Country** Player of the Year to be chosen from O'Gorman 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 Castelli as South Dakota'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 state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 5-foot-3 senior earned First Team All-Region honors this past season by taking fifth at the Nike Cross Heartland Regional Championships with a time of 16:56.4. Castelli also was the state's top finisher at Nike Cross Nationals, crossing the line in 84th. She finished third at the Class AA state meet, leading the Knights to seventh place as a team. She also earned First Team All-State honors for the O'Gorman girls soccer team for a second straight year last fall.

Castelli has volunteered locally at the St. Francis House, which works to lift people out of homelessness. She has also donated her time with Soccer Stars, an adaptive program for children with special needs. Her sister, Katie, was the 2021-22 Gatorade State Cross Country Player of the Year. "Libby was consistently the best runner in the state this season," said Luke Jelen, head coach of Lincoln High School. "She is a fierce competitor and her consistency in racing performance makes her hard to beat."

Castelli has maintained a 3.97 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to run at the University of North Carolina this fall.

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 Castelli joins recent Gatorade South Dakota Girls Cross Country Players of the Year Libby Ali Bainbridge (2022-23, Lincoln High School), Alea Hardie (2021-22, O'Gorman High School) and Katie Castelli (2020-21, O'Gorman 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.