

**MERCER ISLAND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE WASHINGTON GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (January 16, 2025) — In its 40<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Sophia Rodriguez** of **Mercer Island High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Washington Girls Cross Country Player of the Year**. Rodriguez is the first Gatorade Washington **Girls Cross Country** Player of the Year to be chosen from Mercer Island 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 Rodriguez as Washington'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-4 sophomore raced to the WIAA Class 3A state title this past season, breaking the tape with a course-record of 16:48.1 and pacing the Islanders to the team championship. Rodriguez crossed the finish in eighth place at the Nike Cross Nationals Final in 17:27.3 to earn Second Team All-America honors. She also took seventh at the Woodbridge Classic, the nation's largest invitational.

Rodriguez has volunteered locally on behalf of the annual Sea-Fair Festival, broadcasting the event's happenings live on 88.9 FM The Bridge. She also helps run her school's radio station. "Few underclassmen have amassed the credentials that Sophia Rodriguez has already banked in recent years," said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. "Her laser focus and mature approach ensure she squeezes every bit of benefit from each experience. She's a rare new diamond on the distance-running scene."

Rodriguez has maintained a 3.55 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her junior 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 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.

Rodriguez joins recent Gatorade Washington Girls Cross Country Players of the Year Logan Hofstee (2023-24, East Valley High School), Anna Callahan (2022-23, Skyline High School), Macy Marquardt (2021-22, Kennewick High School) and Julia David-Smith (2020-21, Issaquah 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](http://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](https://x.com/Gatorade).