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**ASSUMPTION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE KENTUCKY VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 16, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Rylee Rader of Assumption High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Kentucky Volleyball Player of the Year. Rader is the twelfth Gatorade Kentucky Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Assumption High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Rader as Kentucky's best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award to be announced in January, Rader joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including USA Volleyball players Kayla Banwarth (2006-07, Wahlert HS, Iowa), Alisha Glass (2005-06, Leland Public HS, Mich.), Jordan Larson (2004-05, Logan View HS, Neb.) and Foluke Akinradewo (2004-05, St. Thomas HS, Fla.).

The 6-foot-2 sophomore middle blocker led the Rockets to a 40-3 record and the state championship this past season. Rader recorded 337 kills and 55 blocks with a lofty .511 hitting percentage. The MVP of the state tournament, she was also named the All-Catholic co-Player of the Year and was selected to the national ALL-USA Third Team.

Rader has provided support for children suffering the rare skin disease epidermolysis bullosa, and has volunteered locally on behalf of the Salvation Army as well as food-donation drives. "Rylee Rader is a complete difference maker," said Buck McCoart, head coach at Notre Dame Academy. "She's tall and physical and she can hit any spot on the court with her swing. She hits a high percentage and she's also a great blocker."

Rader has maintained a 3.67 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 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 work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Rader joins recent Gatorade Kentucky Volleyball Players of the Year Paige Hammons (2016-17, Sacred Heart Academy), Morgan Hentz (2015-16, Notre Dame Academy), Merideth Jewell (2014-15, Mercy Academy), Alexa Filley (2013-14, Assumption High School), Courtney Crable (2012-13, Mercy Academy), Katie George (2011-12, Assumption High School), Jeni Houser (2010-11, Assumption High School), Deja McClendon (2009-10, duPont Manual High School), Casey Garvey (2008-09, Mercy Academy) and Kaitlynn James (2007-08, Assumption High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Rader will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow the conversation on Twitter #GatoradePOY. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit <http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com/>.

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