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**POST FALLS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® IDAHO GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 19, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Melody Kempton of Post Falls High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Idaho Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Kempton is the fifth Gatorade Idaho Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Post Falls 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 Kempton as Idaho's best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award announced in March, Kempton joins an elite alumni association of past state girls basketball award-winners, including Maya Moore (2005-06 Collins Hill HS, Ga.), Rashanda McCants (2004-05, Asheville HS, N.C.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Diana Taurasi (1998-99 & 1999-00, Don Antonio Lugo HS, Calif.), Shyra Ely (1999-00, Ben Davis HS, Ind.) and Lisa Leslie (1988-89, Morningside HS, Calif.).

The 6-foot senior post player led the Trojans to a 24-2 record and a Class 5A state championship this past season. Kempton averaged 16 points, 8.0 rebounds, 3.0 blocks, 3.0 steals and 2.0 assists per game while shooting 63 percent from the field. A four-time Inland Empire League Player of the Year and three-time All-State selection, Kempton is rated as the nation's No. 20 forward in the Class of 2018 by espnW.

A three-time state champion high jumper and triple jumper, Kempton has volunteered locally with the St. Pius X Catholic Church youth group and as a host at the Idaho Catholic Youth Convention. She has also donated her time as part of community service initiatives at national parks, as a youth basketball camp leader and as a reading volunteer at local elementary schools. "Melody just changed the game athletically," said Dave Cornelia, head coach at Lewiston High. "She definitely separated herself from the pack in our league and in our state."

Kempton has maintained a 4.12 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball at Gonzaga University beginning 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.

Kempton joins recent Gatorade Idaho Girls Basketball Players of the Year Tori Williams (2016-17, Centennial High School), Destiny Slocum (2015-16 & 2014-15, Mountain View High School), Leah Bonner (2013-14, Skyview High School), Dani Failor (2012-13, Post Falls High School), Tisha Phillips (2011-12, Lewiston High School), Jackie Luna-Castro (2010-11, Boise High School), Katelyn Loper (2009-10, Post Falls High School), and Katie Baker (2008-09, 2007-08 & 2006-07, Lake City High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Melody 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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