

HARRISBURG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE SOUTH DAKOTA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (January 9, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Gabi Zachariasen of Harrisburg High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade South Dakota Volleyball Player of the Year.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation's best high school athletes for their excellence in sport, academics and community. The award recognizes Zachariasen as South Dakota's best high school volleyball player, and she joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Kerri Walsh Jennings (1995-96, Archbishop Mitty High School, CA), April Ross (1999-00, Newport Harbor High School, CA) and Campbell Flynn (2024-25, Mercy High School, MI).

The 6-foot senior outside hitter led the Tigers (35-2) to a fourth consecutive Class AA state title this past season, amassing 523 kills to average 5.2 per set while compiling a hitting percentage of .377. Now a three-time Gatorade Player of the Year, Zachariasen added 215 digs, 81 service aces and 40 blocks. Ranked as the nation's No. 92 recruit in her class by PrepDig, she was named the state's AA Miss Volleyball and an AVCA Second Team All-American. She anchored a Harrisburg program that suffered zero in-state losses in the past two campaigns.

An active member of her church community, Zachariasen has volunteered locally by coaching and instructing youth volleyball players at camps and clinics. She has also donated her time building stuffed animals for first responders attending to children in crisis. "Honestly, there are no words to describe her," said Theresa Hickman of PrepDig. "She's in a class by herself."

Zachariasen has maintained a weighted 3.88 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play volleyball at the University of South Dakota this fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one state winner from each of the 50 states and Washington D.C., in 12 different sports: football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, baseball, softball, boys and girls soccer, and boys and girls track & field. In total, 610 high school athletes are honored each year. From the pool of state winners, one national winner is selected in each of the 12 sports. 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 winners in each sport.

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 \$6.4 million in grants to winners across more than 2,200 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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