

**ABERDEEN CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE SOUTH DAKOTA GIRLS TRACK AND FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 25, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Taryn Hermansen of Aberdeen Central High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade South Dakota Girls Track and Field 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 Hermansen as South Dakota’s best high school girls track and field athlete and she joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Sanya Richards (2001-02, St. Thomas Aquinas High School, Florida), Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone (2015-16 & 2016-17, Union Catholic Regional High School, New Jersey) and Jane Hedengren (2024-25, Timpview High School, Utah).

The 6-foot-2 senior won the shot put event at the Class AA state championships with a meet-record throw of 47 feet, 3 inches this past season, eclipsing a decade-old mark. Hermansen added a third-place showing in the discus with a personal-best effort of 118-4, leading the Golden Eagles to seventh place as a team and earning Class AA Female MVP for Field Events. Her personal-best put of the shot this season soared 48-11, which ranked No. 12 nationally among prep girls competitors this spring and No. 2 in state history. A four-time All-State selection in track and three-time All-State honoree in basketball, she set 10 meet records in the shot put as a senior.

A four-year member of her school’s Student Senate and student body president as a senior, Hermansen is also a two-year member of the Captains Club, which brings together student-athletes who demonstrate leadership, integrity and accountability both in and out of uniform. She has volunteered locally on behalf of the Humane Society, the Safe Harbor Food Drive and the Stratford Community Theater. She has also donated her time as a church Sunday school teacher and sound board operator in addition to coaching youth basketball, softball and T-ball athletes. “Taryn Hermansen put herself in the national-elite conversation when she flirted with 49 feet in the shot put at the Watoma Relays,” said Rich Gonzalez, editor of PrepCalTrack.com. “She now ranks No. 2 in state history in the event—no small feat in a throws-rich state—and she concludes her prep career as one of the most decorated prep track and field athletes in South Dakota history.”

Hermansen has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to compete on scholarship 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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