

OAKTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE VIRGINIA 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 Abigail Mesfin of Oakton High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Virginia 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 Mesfin as Virginia’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 5-foot-5 junior distance talent won the 3200-meter run at the Class 6 state meet this past season, breaking the tape in 10:17.08, a time that ranked No. 59 nationally among prep girls competitors in 2026. Mesfin finished fifth in the 3000 at the Penn Relays Carnival with a time of 9:29.54, which ranked No. 8 nationally. She also won the 1600 at the Northern Region 6D Championships with a time of 4:41.83, which ranked No. 10 nationally. Earlier this month, her school’s 4,000-meter Distance Medley Relay team took gold at Nike Outdoor Nationals.

A competitor at the DECA International Career Development Conference in each of the last two years, Mesfin has volunteered locally with Girls for Days, creating kits for girls who lack access to adequate menstrual products. “Abigail is a fierce competitor with incredible strength, speed and endurance,” said Emily Stewart, head coach of Yorktown High School. “She’s able to close races faster than any of her competition. She makes running look effortless.”

Mesfin has maintained a weighted 4.29 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school 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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