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**SHAKOPEE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® MINNESOTA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 10, 2016) — In its 31<sup>st</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Taylor Koenen of Shakopee High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Minnesota Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Koenen is the first Gatorade Minnesota Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Shakopee 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 court, distinguishes Koenen as Minnesota'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, Koenen joins an elite alumni association of past state girls basketball award-winners, including Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Diana Taurasi (1998-99 & 1999-00, Don Antonio Lugo HS, Calif.), Maya Moore (2005-06 Collins Hill HS, Ga.), Rashanda McCants (2004-05, Asheville HS, N.C.), Shyra Ely (1999-00, Ben Davis HS, Ind.) and Lisa Leslie (1988-89, Morningside HS, Calif.).

The 6-foot-2 senior guard has led the Sabers to a 27-1 record and a berth in the sectional finals against Minnetonka, scheduled for March 11. Koenen averages 21.1 points, 8.1 rebounds, 3.3 assists and 3.2 steals per game. The three-time South Suburban Conference Player of the Year, she was a First Team All-State and All-Metro selection as a junior.

Koenen has maintained a 3.93 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of Feed My Starving Children and the U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots Foundation.

"Koenen's got the total package," said Matt Nilsen, head coach at Edina High. "She can play all five positions, defend any position and she can adjust to most anything that is thrown at her. She does all the little things that great players realize win games."

Koenen has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of North Carolina 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 high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), 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.

Koenen joins recent Gatorade Minnesota Girls Basketball Players of the Year Madison Guebert (2014-15, Eastview High School), Chase Coley (2013-14, Washburn High School), Rebekah Dahlman (2012-13 & 2011-12, Braham Area High School), Rachel Banham (2010-11, Lakeville North High School), Sari Noga (2009-10, Parkers Prairie High School), Tayler Hill (2008-09 & 2007-08, Minneapolis South High School), and Janessa Wolff (2006-07, Park Rapids Area High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. 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 [www.gatorade.com/poy](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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