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**BELLEVUE WEST HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE NEBRASKA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 23, 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 Chloe Akin-Otiko of Bellevue West High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Nebraska Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Akin-Otiko is the second Gatorade Nebraska Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Bellevue West 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 track, distinguishes Akin-Otiko as Nebraska's best high school girls track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Akin-Otiko joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Allyson Felix (2001-02, Los Angeles Baptist, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt HS, Ia.) and Bianca Knight (2006-07, Ridgeland HS, Miss.).

The 5-foot-9 senior sprinter won three individual state championships this spring and led the Thunderbirds to a fifth-place finish as a team at the Class A state meet. A four-time Gatorade Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year, Akin-Otiko swept the sprints for the fourth consecutive year, winning the 100-meter dash with a time of 11.76 seconds, the 200-meter dash in 24.11 and the 400-meter run in 56.09, capturing all-class gold with the fastest times in all competitive classifications. A four-time First Team All-State selection, she was unbeaten against Nebraska competition in 2016.

Akin-Otiko has maintained a 5.41 GPA in the classroom on a 5-point scale. A member of the National Honor Society, she has volunteered locally on behalf of her church youth group.

"Chloe Akin-Otiko is an extremely talented runner who has accomplished historic feats," said Greg Golka, head coach at Marian High. "She has worked extremely hard to get where she is. She is also humble and kind to other competitors. All of us in the coaching community are in awe of what she has done on the track and we are proud that she is a product of Nebraska high school track & field."

Akin-Otiko has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at the University of Kansas 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.

Akin-Otiko joins Gatorade Nebraska Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Clara Nichols (2011-12, Millard South High School), Aubree Worden (2010-11 & 2009-10, Scottsbluff High School), Kelli Budd (2008-09, Marian High School), Emily Sisson (2007-08, Millard North High School), and Natalie Willer (2006-07, Elkhorn 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).