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**CHAMPLIN PARK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MINNESOTA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 17, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Sydney Hilley of Champlin Park High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Minnesota Volleyball Player of the Year. Hilley is the first Gatorade Minnesota Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Champlin Park 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 field, distinguishes Hilley as Minnesota's best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award to be announced in January, Hilley joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including USA Volleyball players Kayla Banwarth (2006-07, Wahlert HS, Iowa), Alisha Glass (2005-06, Leland Public HS, Mich.), Jordan Larson (2004-05, Logan View HS, Neb.) and Foluke Akinradewo (2004-05, St. Thomas HS, Fla.).

The returning Gatorade State Player of the Year, the 6-foot senior outside hitter amassed 641 kills and 261 digs this past season, leading the Rebels (31-3) to the Class AAA state championship match. Hilley also recorded 67 blocks and 35 service aces while posting a kill percentage of .501 and a hitting percentage of .431. A MaxPreps First Team All-American and a two-time Metro Player of the Year, Hilley was a setter for the 2016 USA Volleyball Women's Junior National Team. She concluded her prep volleyball career with 1,891 kills, 1,502 assists and 1,092 digs.

Hilley has volunteered locally as a youth mentor and as a youth volleyball coach. "Sydney Hilley was the most dominant player we saw all season," said Mike Dean, head coach of Prior Lake High. "Sydney was the player on her team and carried them all season."

Hilley has maintained a weighted 4.19 GPA in the classroom. Taking advantage of NCAA early signing rules, Hilley inked a financial-aid agreement that paves the way for her to enroll at the University of Wisconsin. She graduated from high school last month and will begin classes in the spring semester.

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 Player of the Year Selection Committee, 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.

Two-time winner Hilley joins Gatorade Minnesota Volleyball Players of the Year Samantha Seliger Swenson (2014-15, Hopkins High School), Taylr McNeil (2013-14, Eagan High School), Sarah Wilhite (2012-13 & 2011-12, Eden Prairie High School), Kellie McNeil (2010-11, Lakeville North High School), Ashley Wittman (2009-10 & 2008-09, Shakopee High School) and Jennifer Lopez (2007-08, DGF High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Hilley will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow the conversation on Twitter #GatoradePOY. 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.

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