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**UNION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE OKLAHOMA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 19, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Taylor Malham of Union High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Malham is the third Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Union 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 Malham as Oklahoma's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Malham joins an elite alumni association of past state soccer award-winners, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel HS, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, 2002-03, East Brunswick HS, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-04, Blue Valley West HS, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire HS, Mass.), Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista HS, Colo.).

The 5-foot-8 senior midfielder scored 17 goals and passed for 12 assists this past season, leading the Redskins (17-1) to their third consecutive Class 6A state championship. Malham is a First Team All-Metro and All-State honoree and was an All-Region selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America.

Malham has volunteered locally on behalf of youth sports programs. "Malham seems to be everywhere, and every goal scored by Union either starts with her, ends with her or goes through her," said Troy Tokarchik, head coach at Bishop Kelley High School. "She's had a tremendous season and an exceptional career."

Malham has maintained a weighted 4.29 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Arkansas 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 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.

Malham joins recent Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Soccer Players of the Year Parker Goins (2015-16, Union High School), Kaylee Dao (2014-15, Jenks High School), Anna Beffer (2013-14, Union High School), Liz Keester (2012-13 & 2010-11, Jenks High School), Kaela Little (2011-12, Bishop Kelley High School), Hayley Harryman (2009-10, Edmond North High School), Caitlin Mooney (2008-09, Edmond Sante Fe High School), Katie Bykowski (2007-08, Bishop Kelley High School), and Rebecca Allen (2006-07, Jenks High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Taylor 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 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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