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**STANTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEBRASKA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 22, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced MacKenzie Brandl of Stanton High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Nebraska Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Brandl is the first Gatorade Nebraska Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Stanton 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 Brandl 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, Brandl joins an elite alumni association of state track & field award-winners, including Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt High School, Iowa), Allyson Felix (2002-03, Los Angeles Baptist High School, Calif.), Robert Griffin III (2006-07, Copperas Cove High School, Texas), Grant Fisher (2013-14 & 2014-15, Grand Blanc High School, Mich.) and Candace Hill (2014-15, Rockdale County High School, Ga.).

The 5-foot-4 senior sprinter captured three individual state titles this spring, leading the Mustangs to a fourth-place finish at the Class C state meet. The 2017 Lincoln Journal Star Girls Athlete of the Year, Brandl won the 100-meter dash with a time of 12.34 seconds and earned all-class gold in both the 200-meter dash in 25.34 and the 400-meter run, breaking the tape in 56.85.

A member of her school's concert choir and the Future Farmers of America, for which she has served as treasurer, Brandl has volunteered locally on behalf of the National Honor Society. "MacKenzie Brandl's greatest strength is her ability to attack whatever task is asked of her with unmatched focus and borderline reckless abandon," said Stanton High head coach David Ernesti. "Everything she does is done with 100 percent effort and she will try to do it at 100 miles per hour."

Brandl has maintained a 3.79 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at Doane University 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.

Brandl joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Chloe Akin-Otiko (2015-16, 2014-15, 2013-14 & 2012-13, Bellevue West High School), 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.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, MacKenzie 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.

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