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ELKHORN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NEBRASKA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 18, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Skylar Heinrich of Elkhorn High School** as its **2017-18 Gatorade Nebraska Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Heinrich is the third Gatorade Nebraska Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Elkhorn 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 Heinrich as Nebraska'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, Heinrich joins an elite alumni association of past state soccer award-winners, including Alexi Lallas (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 (2004-05, Blue Valley West HS, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire HS, Mass.) and Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista HS, Colo.).

The 5-foot-3 junior forward led the Antlers to a 16-3 record and the Class B state championship this past season. Heinrich scored 31 goals and passed for 14 assists, including both tallies in a 2-0 win over Skutt Catholic High in the state final. She recorded 10 multi-goal games including four hat tricks. The captain of the Journal Star's 2018 Super-State Team, she concluded her junior year with 102 goals and 21 assists.

Heinrich has volunteered locally with the Nebraska Humane Society and as a youth soccer coach. "Skylar is the real deal—she might be the fastest player I have ever seen with the ball at her feet," said John Carlson, head coach of Skutt Catholic High. "Once she gets space, no one in Nebraska can defend her. She single-handedly beat us in the championship game."

Heinrich has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom. Taking advantage of NCAA early signing rules, Heinrich intends to ink a financial-aid agreement that paves the way for her to enroll early at Creighton University. She will graduate from high school this December and begin collegiate 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.

Heinrich joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Girls Soccer Players of the Year Hannah Davis (2016-17, Lincoln Southwest High School), Brenna Ochoa (2015-16, Millard West High School), Michelle Xiao (2014-15, Westside High School), Maddie Elliston (2013-14 & 2012-13, Marian High School), Jackie Tondl (2011-12, Marian High School), Mayme Conroy (2010-11, Skutt Catholic High School), Katie Pickinpaugh (2009-10, Millard West High School), Allie Adam (2008-09, Millard West High School), and Molly Thomas (2007-08 & 2006-07, Millard North High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Heinrich 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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