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AMERICAN FORK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE UTAH 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 **Jamie Shepherd of American Fork High School** as its **2017-18 Gatorade Utah Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Shepherd is the first Gatorade Utah Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from American Fork 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 Shepherd as Utah'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, Shepherd 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 (2004-05, Blue Valley West HS, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire HS, Mass.), and Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista HS, Colo.).

The 5-foot-6 junior midfielder led the Cavemen to a 19-1 record and the Class 6A state championship this past season. Shepherd scored 15 goals and passed for 10 assists, including a goal and an assist in American Fork's 3-1 win over Syracuse High in the state final. The Deseret News' Miss Soccer selection, she concluded her junior year with 28 goals in her prep soccer career.

Shepherd runs her own house-cleaning business. She has also volunteered locally as a youth camp counselor and on behalf of disabled individuals at the Utah State Development Center. "Jamie is a diverse and dynamic player," said Lee Tortorelli, head coach of Pleasant Grove High. "A lot of that team's diversity (of offensive looks) came from Jamie being able to coordinate their attack and find weaknesses of the other team."

Shepherd has maintained a 3.89 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play soccer on scholarship at Brigham Young University beginning in the fall of 2019.

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.

Shepherd joins recent Gatorade Utah Girls Soccer Players of the Year Olivia Wade (2016-17, Davis High School), Holly Daugirda (2015-16, Skyline High School), Hailey Skolmoski (2014-15, Riverton High School), Bizzy Phillips (2013-14 & 2012-13, Alta High School), Michele Murphy (2011-12, Alta High School), Stephanie Verdoia (2010-11, Brighton High School), Jaiden Thornock (2009-10, Bonneville), Kealia Ohai (2008-09 & 2007-08, Alta High School), and Megan Ohai (2006-07, Alta) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Shepherd 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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