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

CHICAGO (June 21, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Ally Ryan of Jenks High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Ryan is the second Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Jenks 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 Ryan as Oklahoma'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, Ryan 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-10 senior repeated as champion in the 800-meter run with a time of 2:11.72 at the Class 6A state meet this past season. The state's returning Gatorade Girls Track and Field Athlete of the Year, Ryan also won the Jim Thorpe Award as the state's top female track athlete for a second consecutive season. She broke a state record in the 1600 with her time of 4:51.55 at the Frontier Valley Conference Meet in April.

A peer tutor in her school, Ryan has also volunteered locally on behalf of a food bank and drug abuse prevention initiatives. "Ally is the toughest athlete I've ever been around and what she did this year was truly exceptional," said Jenks coach Clif Mitchell. "She had surgery to remove a cyst from her foot in late January and only had eight to nine weeks of training leading up to her state record in the 1600. I think she learned a lot about herself during that time: how to manage expectations and how to deal with adversity when it looked like your senior year dreams were going to be ruined."

Ryan has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at the University of Kansas 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.

Two-time winner Ryan joins Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Carsyn Spurgeon (2015-16 & 2014-15, Vinita High School), Baylor Reese (2013-14, Fairview High School), Regan Ward (2012-13, Beggs High School), Madison Reynolds (2011-12, Douglass High School), Hannah Helker (2010-11, Edmond North High School), Danielle Nowell (2009-10, Plainview), Carissa Levingston (2008-09 & 2007-08, Midwest City), and Kylie Spurgeon (2006-07, Owasso) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Ryan 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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