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**SIDNEY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MONTANA BOYS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 21, 2018) — In its 33<sup>rd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Garrison Hughes of Sidney High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Montana Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Hughes is the first Gatorade Montana Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Sidney 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 Hughes as Montana's best high school boys track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Hughes 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, 170-pound senior won the pole vault and was part of the second-place 4x100-meter relay quartet and the fifth-place 4x400 foursome at the Montana Class A & B Track & Field Championships, helping the Eagles take third as a team. At the Eastern A/Central A Divisional Meet, Hughes set a new state record with a vault clearance of 17 feet, which ranked No. 10 in the nation among prep competitors in 2018 at the time of his selection. Hughes also competed this month's USATF Junior Outdoor Championships, where he placed ninth with a clearance of 15 feet, 11 inches. He concluded his high school career as a three-time state pole vault champion, also posting personal-best performances in the 100 meters (11.60), 400 (50.97) and long jump (19-3).

A National Honor Society member, Hughes served on his school's Student Council for four years and was student body vice president this past school year. He has donated his time as a student tutor and has volunteered locally teaching pole vaulting to young athletes. "Garrison's definitely worthy of this award," said Tim Temple, head coach at Dawson County High. "He's the second kid in the state to jump 16 feet, the first to go 17 feet, and the eighth to do so in the nation. You go to a track meet, and you can tell the kids that are a cut above the rest. Garrison is one of them."

Hughes has maintained a 3.94 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to compete on scholarship in track and field at the University of Nebraska 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.

Hughes joins recent Gatorade Montana Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Dawson LaRance (2016-17, Billings Senior High School), Jake Perrin (2015-16, Butte High School), Dalton Daum (2014-15 & 2013-14, Butte High School), Matt Tokarz (2012-13, Flathead High School), Zach Perrin (2011-12, Flathead High School), Scotty Koehler-Owens (2010-11 & 2009-10, Billings Senior High School), Chris Wilson (2008-09, C.M. Russell High School), Josh Pelczar (2007-08, Billings West High School), and Brian Vallie (2006-07, Hardin High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Hughes 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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