

BLAINE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MINNESOTA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 20, 2019) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Madison Schmidt of Blaine High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Minnesota Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year**. Schmidt is the first Gatorade Minnesota Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Blaine 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 Schmidt as Minnesota'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, Schmidt 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-11 junior set a meet record with a leap of 5 feet, 10 inches in the high jump at the Class AA state championships this past season, leading the Bengals to a 15th-place finish as a team. A two-time state champion, she set a state record in the high jump in May with a leap of 6 feet even, which ranked No. 5 in the nation among prep competitors at the time of her selection. Schmidt also qualified for the 800-meter run at the state meet and was the anchor on Blaine's 4x800-meter relay team.

A member of the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association, Schmidt has volunteered locally at a firearm safety camp. She has also donated her time on behalf of multiple community service initiatives through her church youth group. "I think the mental approach Madison has is at a very high level," said Russ Sullivan, head coach of Coon Rapids High. "She also runs the 800 and 200. To be able to run and be a high-level jumper is very difficult."

Schmidt has maintained a weighted 4.26 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school 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. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Schmidt joins recent Gatorade Minnesota Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Emily Kompelien (2017-18, Edina High School), Anna Keefer (2016-17, St. Michael-Albertville High School), Jedah Caldwell (2015-16, Chanhassen High School), Ruby Stauber (2014-15, Wayzata High School) and Shaina Burns (2013-14, Lakeville South High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Schmidt also has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of her choosing. She is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit www.Gatorade.com/POY, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

###