

**TEWKSBURY MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MASSACHUSETTS GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 25, 2020) — In its 35<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Makayla Paige of Tewksbury Memorial High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Paige is the first Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Tewksbury Memorial 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 Paige as Massachusetts'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, Paige joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, 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 state's returning Gatorade Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year, the 5-foot-4 junior set a state record in winning the 600-meter run at the Division 3 Indoor state meet. The clocking of 1:29.70 ranked as the nation's No. 1 mark among prep competitors during the 2020 indoor season and ranks No. 7 all-time. Paige also ranked in the Top 10 nationally this past winter in the 500-meter run and 800-meter run, and she was in the Top 100 in the 300-meter run, the 400-meter run and the 1,000-meter run. A two-time State Track Association Athlete of the Year, she earned New Balance Nationals Outdoor All-American status after finishing third in the 800 in 2019.

Paige has volunteered locally as a youth running coach, and she has donated her time to a fundraising campaign to benefit She's The First, which helps young women from underprivileged communities further their education. "Once again, Makayla had a record-setting season in Massachusetts," said Cullen Hagan, head coach of Billerica High. "To see one of her races against the best girls in the state shows how truly dominant she is. Even spectators who have no idea about track will stop and watch the second one of her races starts."

Paige has maintained a weighted 4.03 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. 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 Paige joins recent Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Samantha Friborg (2017-18, Acton-Boxborough Regional High School), Clare Martin (2016-17, Newton South High School), Margie Cullen (2015-16, Needham High School), Brianna Duncan (2014-15, Cambridge Rindge & Latin School), and Karina Shepard (2013-14 & 2012-2013, Dracut High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

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