

**THOMAS WORTHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE OHIO BOYS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 29, 2020) — In its 35<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Justin Braun of Thomas Worthington High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Ohio Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Braun is the first Gatorade Ohio Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Thomas Worthington 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 Braun as Ohio'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 July, Braun 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 6-foot-3, 185-pound sophomore broke the state record in the 400-meter dash with a time of 46.77 seconds at the Div. 1 indoor state meet this past winter, which was the top time in the U.S. during the 2020 indoor season and ranked as the nation's No. 10 clocking in history among prep competitors. Braun also anchored the state title-winning 4x400 relay quartet and also won the 200 in 21.38, which ranked as the nation's No. 6 prep indoor performance in 2020. He won the outdoor state championship in the 400 as a freshman in 2019, then took sixth in the event at the New Balance Nationals Outdoor.

Braun has volunteered locally on behalf of youth track programs. "Justin is a very talented young man, the kind that doesn't come along very often," said Worthington coach Bill Darling. "He sets high goals for himself and then goes after those goals with a focus not often seen in someone this young. He has helped set the tone for our program."

Braun has maintained a 3.54 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his junior 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.

Braun joins recent Gatorade Ohio Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Evan Matthews (2018-19, Pickerington High School Central), Dustin Horter (2017-18, Lakota East High School), Max Frye (2016-17, New Albany High School), Andrew Jordan (2015-16, Watkins Memorial High School), Chad Zallow (2014-15, John F. Kennedy High School), and Steele Wasik (2013-14, St. Edward 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).