

**INDIAN RIVER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE DELAWARE VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 6, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Raychel Ehlers of Indian River High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Delaware Volleyball Player of the Year. Ehlers is the first Gatorade Delaware Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Indian River 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 Ehlers as Delaware's best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Ehlers joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including USA Volleyball players Kayla Banwarth (2006-07, Wahler High School, Iowa), Alisha Glass (2005-06, Leland Public High School, Mich.), Jordan Larson (2004-05, Logan View High School, Neb.) and Foluke Akinradewo (2004-05, St. Thomas High School, Fla.).

The 5-foot-9 senior outside hitter recorded 297 kills, 135 digs, 73 service aces and 13 blocks this past season, leading the Indians (11-3) to the state quarterfinals. The Delaware Coaches Association Player of the Year, Ehlers is a three-time All-State selection and a four-time All-Conference honoree.

A member of her church's youth ministry, Ehlers has volunteered locally on behalf of a food pantry, a summer camp, the Special Olympics and Operation Shoebox. "Ehlers' power may be what catches most people's eyes, but it's her finesse and range of offense that impress me the most," said Tyler Coupe, head coach at Cape Henlopen High. "Her ability to hit all possible options on the court made her nearly impossible to defend."

Ehlers has maintained a weighted 4.45 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at Coastal Carolina University 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 works with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Ehlers joins recent Gatorade Delaware Volleyball Players of the Year Savannah Seemans (2019-20, Saint Mark's High School), Madeline Matheny (2018-19, Charter School of Wilmington), Emily Jarome (2017-18, Padua Academy), and Sydney Fulton (2016-17, Delaware Military Academy), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Ehlers has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Ehlers is also eligible to submit a 30-second video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$2.7 million across 1,117 organizations.

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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com, on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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