

**CAPITAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MONTANA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 27, 2021) — In its 36<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Dani Bartsch of Capital High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Montana Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Bartsch is the first Gatorade Montana Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Capital 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 Bartsch as Montana's best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Bartsch joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Skylar Diggins-Smith (2008-09, Washington High School, Ind.), Nneka Ogwumike (2007-08, Cy-Fair High School, Texas), Maya Moore (2006-07, Collins Hill High School, Ga.), Candace Parker (2002-03 & 2003-04, Naperville Central High School, Ill.), and Lisa Leslie (1989-90, Morningside High School, Calif.).

The 6-foot-2 senior forward led the Bruins to a 17-1 record and the Class AA state championship this past season. Bartsch averaged 15.5 points, 10.9 rebounds, 3.5 assists and 2.3 steals, netting 15 points in the Bruins' 33-31 win over Hellgate High in the state title game to earn tournament MVP honors. A two-time Independent Record All-Area Player of the Year, she concluded her prep basketball career with 878 points and 664 rebounds.

Bartsch's twin sister, Paige, was the 2018-19 Gatorade Montana Girls Volleyball Player of the Year. Dani Bartsch has volunteered with her local chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and as a youth basketball coach. She has also donated her time to multiple community service initiatives through her church youth group. "Dani Bartsch is a complete player," said Charlie Johnson, head coach of Billings West High. "She was just dominant on the court. She made things happen."

Bartsch has maintained a 3.94 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Montana 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.

Bartsch joins recent Gatorade Montana Girls Basketball Players of the Year Kyndall Keller (2019-20, Havre High School), Jamie Pickens (2018-19 & 2017-18, Helena High School), and Sophia Stiles (2016-17, Malta High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Bartsch has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Bartsch 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 [www.playeroftheyear.gatorade.com](http://www.playeroftheyear.gatorade.com), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](https://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

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