

**WAVERLY-SHELL ROCK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE IOWA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 15, 2021) — In its 36<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Kenzie Roling of Waverly-Shell Rock High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Iowa Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Roling is the first Gatorade Iowa Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Waverly-Shell Rock 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 Roling as Iowa's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Roling joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook High School, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel High School, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy School of Young Women, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02 & 2002-03, East Brunswick High School, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-05, Blue Valley West High School, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire High School, Mass.) and Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista High School, Colo.).

The 5-foot-7 senior forward had led the Go-Hawks to a 16-2 record and a berth in the Class 2A state tournament at the time of her selection. Roling scored 68 goals and passed for 16 assists through 18 games. A two-time First Team All-State selection, she owned 139 career goals entering the state tournament.

Roling has raised funds to benefit mitochondrial disease research and has volunteered locally on behalf of blood-donation drives and youth soccer programs. "Kenzie Roling is truly a special talent that we don't see in Iowa very often," said Chris Higgins, head coach at Xavier High. "She's a Big Ten-caliber player who can do things on the field that I've never seen from a player in our state."

Roling has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Iowa 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.

Roling joins recent Gatorade Iowa Girls Soccer Players of the Year Abigail Santana (2019-20 & 2018-19, Linn-Mar High School), Melina Hegelheimer (2017-18, Ames High School), and Regan Steigleder (2016-17, Iowa City West High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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

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