

**STEVENS POINT AREA SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WISCONSIN GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (July 2, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Roisin Willis of Stevens Point Area Senior High School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Wisconsin Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Willis is the second Gatorade Wisconsin Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Stevens Point Area Senior 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 Willis as Wisconsin's best high school girls track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Track & Field Player of the Year award to be announced in July, Willis 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 two-time returning Gatorade Girls Track & Field Player of the Year, the 5-foot-11 junior reached the semifinal round of June's U.S. Olympic Trials in the 800-meter run. At the time of her selection, Willis's top 800 time of 2:00.78 at the Trials of Miles New York City Qualifier was an Under-18 world record and ranked No. 1 nationally among 2021 prep competitors in her event. Willis also set a state record in the 1,600-meter run with a time of 4:41.46, which ranked No. 6 nationally, and her best time of 53.62 in the 400-meter dash ranked No. 10 nationally. Only three prep girls in history have clocked an 800 faster than the Stevens Point teen.

An accomplished violin player, Willis performed holiday music via Zoom for area assisted living centers during the pandemic. This spring, she participated in a practice-a-thon fundraiser to raise scholarship dollars for fellow music students. As a member of National Honor Society, Roisin has helped prepare goodie bags and thank you cards for hospital workers during the height of COVID-19. She also participated in a NHS pen-pal program with fourth-graders. In addition, she has volunteered on behalf of the North Central Conservancy Trust, helping to clear a new multi-use trail at Bukolt Park in Stevens Point. "Unstoppable, relentless, Roisin can conquer any event on the track," said Ali Luedtke, head coach of Marshfield High. "She covers so much ground when she runs and it's a joy to watch. She leaves everyone in the dust."

Willis has maintained a weighted 4.0 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 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.

Three-time winner Willis joins recent Gatorade Wisconsin Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Brooke Jaworski (2017-18, Wausau West High School), and Josie Schaefer (2016-17, Baraboo High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Willis has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Willis 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.