

**WEST JORDAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE UTAH BOYS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (July 8, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Austin Klingler of West Jordan High School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Utah Boys Track & Field Player of the Year**. Klingler is the second Gatorade Utah Boys Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from West Jordan 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 Klingler as Utah's best high school boys track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Track & Field Player of the Year award to be announced in July, Klingler 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 5-foot-11, 145-pound senior set a state record in the 400-meter dash at the Class 6A state meet this past season, leading the Jaguars to a fourth-place finish as a team. At the time of his selection, Klingler's winning 400 time of 47.49 seconds ranked No. 24 nationally among 2021 prep competitors. He also won the 800 and took sixth in the 200-meter dash at the state meet. His season-best clocking of 1:50.61 in the 800 at the Alpha Invitational ranked No. 10 nationally among prep competitors this spring.

Klingler has volunteered locally as part of an elementary school literacy-outreach program, and he has donated time to fundraising campaigns for the benefit of MAD JAGS, West Jordan High's charity. "Austin is one of the most talented runners the state of Utah has ever seen," said Taylor Hatch, head coach of West Jordan High. "His range is incredible. His competitive drive and dedication are exactly what a coach looks for in an athlete."

Klingler has maintained a 3.56 GPA in the classroom. He remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

Klingler joins recent Gatorade Utah Boys Track & Field Players of the Year Thomas Boyden (2019-20, Skyline High School), Blake Freeland (2018-19, Herriman High School), Dallin Draper (2017-18, Delta High School), and Hunter Woodhall (2016-17, Syracuse High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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