

**MARGARETTA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE OHIO GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 30, 2022) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Kenna Stimmel** of **Margaretta High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Ohio Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Stimmel is the first Gatorade Ohio Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Margaretta 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 Stimmel as Ohio'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, Stimmel 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 (2014-15 & 2013-14, Grand Blanc High School, Mich.) and Candace Hill (2014-15, Rockdale County High School, Ga.).

The 5-foot-4 senior broke the state record in the pole vault this past season, clearing 14 feet, 6.25 inches to win the Division 3 state championship. The height represented the nation's No. 2 performance among prep competitors in 2022 at the time of her selection and ranked No. 7 in U.S. girls prep history. Stimmel also anchored the winning 4x100-meter relay team, while taking second in the 200 and fourth in the 100 high hurdles. She finished second in the pole vault at the adidas Outdoor Nationals.

Also a volleyball standout, Stimmel has volunteered locally on behalf of a food pantry, Operation Christmas Child and her school's Big Buddies program. "There are great athletes and then there are elite athletes," said Margaretta High School coach Kasey Haerr. "I can confidently say that I have had the privilege to coach an elite athlete in Kenna. She embraces the true heart of a champion and she trains every day at 100 percent, working to get better so that she can achieve her goals."

Stimmel has maintained a 4.17 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at Virginia Tech 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Stimmel joins recent Gatorade Ohio Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Paige Floriea (2020-21, Mentor High School), Taylor Ewert (2019-20, Beavercreek High School), Olivia Howell (2018-19, Solon High School), and Abby Steiner (2017-18, Dublin Coffman High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, Stimmel has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. Stimmel is also eligible to submit a short 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 \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 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 or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.