

**BROKEN ARROW HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE OKLAHOMA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 30, 2022) — In its 37<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Payton Hinkle** of **Broken Arrow High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Hinkle is the second Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Broken Arrow 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 Hinkle as Oklahoma'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, Hinkle 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-7 senior became the first girl to win the 800-, the 1600- and 3200-meter run at the Class 6A state championship meet this past season, setting two meet records in the process. Hinkle broke the tape in the 1600 with a record time of 4:49.24 and set a new standard of 10:35.29 in the 3200, also claiming the 800 in 2:09.47. She took the 800 title at the state Meet of Champions as well.

A devoted member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Hinkle has served as a youth leader in her church and has volunteered as a mentor for younger runners. "Payton has been a great leader for us who has always stepped up to the challenge," said Broken Arrow High School assistant coach Aaron Partridge. "She'll go down as one of the best distance runners to ever come from the state of Oklahoma."

Hinkle has maintained a weighted 4.14 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to run on scholarship at Oklahoma State University 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.

Hinkle joins recent Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Jada Atkinson (2020-21, Southmoore High School), Daphne Matthews (2019-20, Heritage Hall), Madison Collier (2018-19, Hennessey High School), and Ally Ryan (2017-18, Jenks 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, Hinkle 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. Hinkle 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY), Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade) and Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).