

**HERITAGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VIRGINIA 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 **Madison Whyte** of **Heritage High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Virginia Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Whyte is the first Gatorade Virginia Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Heritage 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 Whyte as Virginia'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, Whyte 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-9 junior broke the tape in the 200-meter dash at the New Balance Nationals Outdoor this past season. At the time of her selection, Whyte's winning time of 23.30 seconds ranked No. 9 nationally among prep competitors in 2022. Whyte also swept the 100-, 200- and 400-meter dashes at the Class 4 state meet, leading the Hurricanes to the team title. She clocked a meet-record 100 time of 11.63 in her qualifying heat at the state meet, a performance that ranked No. 34 in the country.

Whyte has volunteered locally with the Newport News Public Schools Bloom/Flourish program, which is designed to empower young girls to become community leaders. A member of her school choir, she has also donated her time with the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Virginia Peninsula. "Madison is everything as advertised," said Curtis Campbell, head coach of Great Bridge High. "From her warm up to the race and her cool down, she's a notch above her peers in this state. She has little to no wasted movement and top-end speed that is next-level."

Whyte has maintained a weighted 3.90 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school in the 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.

Whyte joins recent Gatorade Virginia Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Lena Gooden (2020-21, Osbourn Park High School), Aaliyah Pyatt (2019-20, Massaponax High School), Britton Wilson (2018-19, Mills E. Godwin High School), and Titiana Marsh (2017-18, Thomas Dale 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, Whyte 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. Whyte 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.

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