

**HOOVER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ALABAMA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 8, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Reniya Kelly** of **Hoover High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Alabama Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Kelly is the third Gatorade Alabama Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Hoover 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 court, distinguishes Kelly as Alabama's best high school girls basketball player. Kelly joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Kiki Rice (2021-22, Sidwell Friends School, Washington, D.C.), Paige Bueckers (2019-20, Hopkins High School, Minn.), Nneka Ogwumike (2007-08, CyFair High School, Texas), and Candace Parker (2003-04 & 2002-03, Naperville Central High School, Ill.).

At the time of her selection, the 5-foot-7 senior guard had led the Buccaneers to a 34-1 record and a berth in the Class 7A state championship game. Kelly averaged 14.7 points, 5.0 assists, 5.0 rebounds and 2.5 steals per game through 35 games. The 2022 Class 7A Player of the Year and a two-time state final MVP, she's ranked as the nation's No. 22 recruit in the Class of 2023 by Blue Star Basketball.

Kelly is active in the children's ministry at her church and has volunteered locally as a peer helper at Hoover High School. "Reniya is elite," said John Smelser, head coach of Vestavia Hills High School. "She is looking to create for teammates, but she is also capable of getting a bucket whenever she wants. It is no fun trying to game-plan to stop her because she can do so much more than score."

Kelly has maintained a weighted 3.88 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of North Carolina 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.

Kelly joins recent Gatorade Alabama Girls Basketball Players of the Year Samiya Steele (2021-22, Hazel Green High School), Sara Puckett (2020-21, Muscle Shoals High School), Sarah Ashlee Barker (2019-20, Spain Park High School), and Annie Hughes (2018-19, Pisgah High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Being a Gatorade Player of the Year means paying it forward for the next generation. Through Gatorade's Play it Forward initiative, every Player of the Year receives a grant to give to one of Gatorade's social impact partners, supporting Gatorade's ambition to fuel the future of sport. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

For nearly 40 years, Gatorade has honored high school athletes at the top of their game as teammates, supporting their communities and achieving academic success. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes and community leaders, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport.

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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