

**MARIAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEBRASKA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 9, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Maddia Groff** of **Marian High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Nebraska Softball Player of the Year**. Groff is the first Gatorade Nebraska Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Marian 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 Groff as Nebraska's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Groff joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Jordyn Bahl (2020-21, Papillion-La Vista High School, Neb.), Megan Faraimo (2017-18, Cathedral Catholic High School, Calif.), Rachel Garcia (2014-15, Highland High School, Calif.) and Cat Osterman (2000-01, Cypress Springs High School, Texas).

The 5-foot-5 senior left-handed pitcher led the Crusaders (33-2) to a Class A state championship this past season, scoring the game-winning run in a 4-3 win over Gretna. Groff compiled a 28-1 record in the circle with a 0.94 ERA in 156.2 innings pitched, striking out 308 batters against just 23 walks. She also hit .518 with four home runs and 32 RBI, scored 36 runs and posted a 1.474 OPS. Groff was named the MaxPreps Nebraska Player of the Year, the 2022 Omaha World Herald All-State Captain and the 2022 Lincoln Journal Star Super State honorary captain. She's ranked as the nation's No. 147 prospect in the Class of 2023 by Extra Innings and concluded her prep career with 1,027 strikeouts.

Groff has volunteered locally with the Miracle League buddy program for children with intellectual and physical challenges and serves as a leadership ambassador within Marian High School. "She holds all the qualifications," said Skutt Catholic High School head coach Ryan Glatter. "Best pitcher on the best team. Hit well throughout the season. Was their leader on and off the field. I know her as a worker and she doesn't miss opportunities to get better."

Groff has maintained a 4.24 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at Southern Illinois 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.

Groff joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Softball Players of the Year Ruby Meylan (2021-22, Skutt Catholic High School), Jordyn Bahl (2020-21 & 2019-20, Papillion-La Vista High School), and Emma Kauf (2018-19, Lincoln Southwest 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.