

**ISSAQUAH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WASHINGTON GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 23, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Shelby Runje** of **Issaquah High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Washington Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Runje is the third Gatorade Washington Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Issaquah 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 Runje as Washington's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Runje joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alyssa Thompson (2020-21, Harvard-Westlake School, Calif.), Mallory Swanson (2014-15, Mountain Vista High School, Colo.), Heather O'Reilly (2002-03 & 2001-02, East Brunswick High School, N.J.) and Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy School of Young Women, N.Y.).

The 5-foot-10 senior forward scored 31 goals and passed for 11 assists this past season, leading the Eagles (14-5) to the Class 4A state championship game. Runje recorded eight multi-goal games, including six hat tricks. A United Soccer Coaches All-American selection, she participated in the High School All-American Game this past December. She concluded her prep soccer career with 57 goals and 32 assists.

Runje has volunteered locally as an elementary school tutor and she's donated her time as a youth soccer coach and referee. "Shelby was the obvious difference-maker for Issaquah and carried that team on her back," said Kate Deines Krieger, a former two-time Washington Gatorade Player of the Year (2006-08). "Throughout last season, there were instances when teams would double or triple-team Shelby."

Runje has maintained a 3.84 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at Gonzaga 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.

Runje joins recent Gatorade Washington Girls Soccer Players of the Year Hayden Crowley (2021-22, Richland High School), Layne St. George (2020-21, Holy Names Academy), Jen Estes (2019-20, Lake Washington High School), and Bea Franklin (2018-19, Seattle Preparatory 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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