

**NEW ROCKFORD-SHEYENNE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NORTH DAKOTA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 28, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Kelsie Belquist** of **New Rockford-Sheyenne High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade North Dakota Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Belquist is the first Gatorade North Dakota Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from New Rockford-Sheyenne 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 Belquist as North Dakota'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, Belquist joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Jasmine Moore (2018-19, Lake Ridge High School, Texas), Sydney McLaughlin (2016-17, 2015-16 & 2014-15, Union Catholic High School, N.J.), and Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt High School, Iowa).

The 5-foot-7 junior won four Class B state titles this past season in addition to setting state records in the 200-meter dash with a time of 23.94 seconds and the 300-meter hurdles with a 41.48. Her hurdles clocking ranks No. 11 nationally among girls prep competitors in 2023. Belquist also produced the fastest 400 clocking in history by a Class B athlete with a time of 56.23. She finished in the top 20 in the 100 hurdles, 400 hurdles and 200 at Nike Outdoor Nationals and concluded her season ranked in the top 60 in the country in four events.

Belquist has been a regular performer at Dakota Prairie Regional Center for the Arts in addition to performing as a vocalist at her church. Also a member of her high school choir, she has also served as a youth swim instructor. A three-sport standout who's earned All-Region honors in basketball and volleyball, Belquist is a member of the Sources of Strength Organization, which guides youth to make life-affirming choices. "Kelsie Belquist has become one of the best small-school athletes in the country, and her four individual state titles led her team to a third-place finish at the Class B state meet, just two points away from winning the championship," said Erik Boal, editor at DyeStat.com. "In addition to developing into one of the elite 300-meter hurdlers nationally, Belquist also set a state record in the 200 dash."

Belquist has maintained a 4.07 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school 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.

Belquist joins recent Gatorade North Dakota Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Anthonett Nabwe (2021-22 & 2020-21, Jamestown High School) and Shelby Frank (2019-20 & 2018-19, Red River 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.