

**HAMLIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE SOUTH 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 **Gracelyn Leiseth** of **Hamlin High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade South Dakota Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Leiseth is the first Gatorade South Dakota Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Hamlin 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 Leiseth as South 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, Leiseth 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 state's returning two-time Gatorade Girls Track & Field Player of the Year, the 5-foot-11 senior set a state record in the discus this past season with a throw of 175 feet, 3 inches at the Northeast Conference final and won the Nike Outdoor Nationals shot put title with a 52-1.5 effort. Leiseth ranked No. 3 nationally in both the discus and shot put among girls prep competitors in 2023. She also launched the shot a state indoor-record distance of 52-6.25 at the USD-Dan Lennon Class B meet in March.

Leiseth has volunteered locally at a shelter for the unhoused in Sioux Falls and has served as a barista at the Mission Coffeehouse in Brookings, which raises money for service missions both locally and internationally. She has also donated her time cleaning at a Crisis Pregnancy Center and fundraised to help victims of human trafficking. A vacation bible school teacher as well, she has worked on behalf of the Special Olympics in addition to being a member of the All-State Chorus the past two years. "When it comes to elite prep throwers in state history, Gracelyn Leiseth stands alone as the queen of the ring," said Erik Boal, editor at DyeStat.com. "Leiseth was the only prep girl to surpass 52 feet in the shot put and 175 feet in the discus nationally this year, a testament to her strength, technique and versatility."

Leiseth has maintained a weighted 4.07 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on scholarship at the University of Florida 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.

Three-time winner Leiseth joins recent Gatorade South Dakota Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Jasmine Greer (2019-20 & 2018-19, Roosevelt 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.