

**COLONY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ALASKA BOYS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 29, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Matthew Rongitsch** of **Colony High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Alaska Boys Track & Field Player of the Year**. Rongitsch is the fourth Gatorade Alaska Boys Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Colony 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 Rongitsch as Alaska's best high school boys track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Track & Field Player of the Year award to be announced in July, Rongitsch joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Nico Young (2019-20, Newbury Park High School, Calif.), Michael Norman (2015-16 & 2014-15, Vista Murrieta High School, Calif.), Grant Fisher (2014-15 & 2013-14, Grand Blanc High School, Mich.) and Robert Griffin III (2006-07, Copperas Cove High School, Texas).

The 6-foot, 155-pound senior swept all three distance events at the Division I state meet this past season, leading the Knights to their first state team championship in 24 years. Rongitsch broke the tape in the 1600-meter run with a time of 4:23.65. He also captured the 800 in 1:58.33 and the 3200 in 9:42.45.

Rongitsch has donated his time generously at more than 10 local multiple community running events, performing all manner of volunteer duties. "Matthew proved to be the catalyst in securing Colony's first team title in 24 years, amassing 30 individual points to lead all scorers at the Alaska state meet," said Rich Gonzalez, editor of PrepCalTrack.com. "Matthew was the lone athlete to earn three gold medals at the state meet."

Rongitsch, who attends Mat-Su Middle College School while competing for Colony, has maintained a weighted 3.29 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on scholarship at the University of Alaska Anchorage 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.

Rongitsch joins recent Gatorade Alaska Boys Track & Field Players of the Year Daniel Abramowicz (2021-22, West Valley High School), Tristian Merchant (2020-21 & 2019-20, Anchorage Christian School), and Terrel Johnson (2018-19, West Valley 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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