

**HAMILTON SOUTHEASTERN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE INDIANA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 8, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Lauren Harden** of **Hamilton Southeastern High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Indiana Volleyball Player of the Year**. Harden is the first Gatorade Indiana Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Hamilton Southeastern High School.

The award, which celebrates the nation’s top high school athletes for excellence on the court, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes Harden as Indiana’s best high school volleyball player. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport, touting an all-star group of alumni that includes Harper Murray (2022-23, Skyline High School, Mich.), Kerri Walsh Jennings (1995-96, Archbishop Mitty High School, Calif.) and April Ross (1999-00, Newport Harbor High School, Calif.).

The 6-foot-3 senior outside hitter led the Royals to a 33-0 record and a second-straight Class 4A state championship this past season. Harden recorded 371 kills and 161 digs while posting a .446 kill percentage and a .323 hitting percentage. The MaxPreps.com National Player of the Year as well as the state’s Miss Volleyball winner, Harden also compiled 38 blocks and 21 service aces. A three-time First Team All-State selection, she concluded her prep volleyball career with 1,250 kills.

Harden is an active member of the Southeastern Sports Network, where she serves as a social media leader, photographer, videographer and graphic designer. She has volunteered locally as part of fundraising campaigns to benefit the Riley Hospital for Children in addition to donating her time to the Black Student Union and as a mentor to elementary school students. “Lauren was a key player on the court for HSE and could attack from anywhere,” said Sara Sutter, head coach of McCutcheon High School. “Her passing improved in serve-serve and she expanded her ability on defense—both blocking and back row.”

Harden maintained a weighted 4.05 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball 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.

Harden joins recent Gatorade Indiana Volleyball Players of the Year Chloe Chicoine (2022-23 & 2021-22, McCutcheon High School), Ali Hornung (2020-21, Our Lady of Providence High School), and Melani Shaffmaster (2019-20, New Castle High School), among the state’s list of former award winners.

As part of Gatorade’s commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners’ grants have totaled more than \$4.9 million across more than 1,600 organizations.

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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