

**BIDDEFORD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MAINE 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 **Danielle Emerson** of **Biddeford High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Maine Volleyball Player of the Year**. Emerson is the fourth Gatorade Maine Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Biddeford 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 Emerson as Maine'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 state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 5-foot-8 senior outside hitter and setter recorded 284 assists and 250 kills this past season, leading the Tigers (13-3) to the Class A state semifinals. A three-time SMAA Class A Conference MVP, Emerson is a two-time Class A Player of the Year and a two-time Portland Press Herald State Player of the Year. She concluded her prep volleyball career with 538 kills.

Emerson has volunteered locally with Special Surfers, a non-profit organization that provides people with special needs the opportunity to surf during the summer. She has also donated her time as a youth mentor and volleyball coach. "Although Danielle is a leading setter, she was also one of our strongest outside hitters this year," said Ruth Shaw, head coach of Biddeford High School. "She was able to take any type of set and make something good happen."

Emerson has maintained a weighted 3.82 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at Plymouth State 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.

Two-time winner Emerson joins recent Gatorade Maine Volleyball Players of the Year Sophie Dickson (2021-22, Yarmouth High School) and Annika Hester (2020-21 & 2019-20, Falmouth 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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