

**BENNINGTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEBRASKA 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 **Olivia Mauch** of **Bennington High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Nebraska Volleyball Player of the Year**. Mauch is the first Gatorade Nebraska Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Bennington 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 Mauch as Nebraska’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 5-foot-7 senior libero led the Badgers to a 30-8 record and a trip to the Class B semifinals this past season. Mauch amassed 682 digs and passed for 609 assists, averaging 7.1 and 6.2 per set, respectively. Ranked as the nation’s No. 16 recruit by PrepVolleyball.com, she also recorded 46 service aces and was named to the Lincoln Journal Star Super State and Omaha World-Herald All-Nebraska teams. She was the starting libero for Team USA’s U19 squad that won gold at the FIVB U19 World Championships last summer.

Mauch has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics, the Bennington Jaycees, the Abide Christmas Store, the Hope Center and the Henry Doorly Zoo. She has also donated her time coaching youth players at camps and clinics. “Olivia—by far—impacted matches more than any other player I saw this season,” said Renee Saunders, head coach at Skutt Catholic High School. “She led her team to the state semis, where they almost pulled off a five-set win over Norris to send her team into the finals. She reminds me of [current Cornhuskers libero] Lexi Rodriguez in so many ways. Especially in serve-receive and defense, and the fact that teams have to stay away from her. She is humble, she works hard and she’s a leader.”

Mauch has maintained a 3.87 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play volleyball on scholarship at the University of Nebraska beginning 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.

Mauch joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Volleyball Players of the Year Lauren Medeck (2022-23, Papillion-La Vista South High School), Bekka Allick (2021-22, Waverly High School) and Lindsay Krause (2020-21 & 2019-20, Skutt Catholic 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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