

MINOT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NORTH DAKOTA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (March 14, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Leelee Bell of Minot High School is the 2023-24 Gatorade North Dakota Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Bell is the third Gatorade North Dakota Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Minot 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 Bell as North Dakota’s best high school girls basketball 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 Candace Parker (2003-04, 2002-03 & 2001-02, Naperville Central High School, Ill.), Paige Bueckers (2017-18, Hopkins High School, Minn.) and Juju Watkins (2022-23 & 2021-22, Sierra Canyon School, Calif.).

The 6-foot-3 sophomore forward averaged 26.1 points and 11.1 rebounds per game this past season, leading the Majettes (23-4) to a berth in the Class AA state tournament. A North Dakota High School Athletic Association All-Tournament selection, Bell set the Western Dakota Association single-game scoring record (45 points) this winter. Ranked as the state’s No. 1 recruit in the Class of 2026 by PrepGirlsHoops, she concluded her sophomore season as the leading scorer in Minot history with 1,673 points.

Bell has volunteered locally with the Dream Catchers Baseball program, which provides baseball opportunities for youth with physical and mental disabilities. She has also donated her time on behalf of the Special Olympics and as a youth basketball instructor. “Basketball-wise, she’s approaching the conversation as one of the best the state has ever seen,” said Shaun Henderson, Mandan High School head coach. “She has the handle of a point guard along with the court vision, she can go inside and post up and also pass out of the post. She will rebound and defend. There is no game-planning for her.”

Bell has maintained a B average in the classroom. She will begin her junior year of high school 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.

Bell joins recent Gatorade North Dakota Girls Basketball Players of the Year Logan Nissley Logan Nissley (2022-23, 2021-22, & 2020-21, Bismarck Century High School) and Abby Duchscherer (2019-20, Kindred 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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