

**BELLEVUE WEST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEBRASKA BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 21, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Jaden Jackson** of **Bellevue West High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Nebraska Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Jackson is the fifth Gatorade Nebraska Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Bellevue West 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 Jackson as Nebraska’s best high school boys 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 LeBron James (2002-03 & 2001-02, St. Vincent – St. Mary High School, Ohio), Karl-Anthony Towns (2013-14 & 2012-13, St. Joseph High School, N.J.) and Jayson Tatum (2015-16, 2014-15 & 2013-14, Chaminade College Preparatory School, Mo.).

The 6-foot-1, 170-pound senior guard led the Thunderbirds to a 27-1 record and a second straight Class A state championship this past season. Jackson averaged 17.2 points, 4.5 rebounds, 2.9 assists and 2.0 steals per game, recording 21 points and seven rebounds as Bellevue West rallied for a 57-48 win over Millard North High School in the state final. A 2023 First Team All-State selection, he concluded his prep basketball career with 1,297 points.

Jackson has volunteered locally at the Omaha Food Bank and on behalf of the Abide Ministries of Omaha. He has also donated his time as a youth basketball camp counselor. “Jaden is an elite scorer on all three levels, this is what makes him so hard to guard,” said Steve Klein, head coach of Bellevue West High School. “His shot may be one of the most pure I have ever coached. What makes him such a complete player is that he can defend all five positions on the floor, which makes our team so much better.”

Jackson has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at South Dakota 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.

Jackson joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Boys Basketball Players of the Year Josiah Dotzler (2022-23, Bellevue West High School), Isaac Traudt (2021-22, Grand Island Senior High School), Hunter Sallis (2020-21, Millard North High School) and Chucky Hepburn (2019-20, Bellevue West 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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