

HUDSONVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MICHIGAN GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 20, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Kendall Aikens** of **Hudsonville High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Michigan Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Aikens is the first Gatorade Michigan Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Hudsonville High School.

The award, which celebrates the nation's top high school athletes for excellence on the field, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes Aikens as Michigan's best high school girls soccer 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 Aly Wagner (1997-98, Presentation High School, Calif.), Mallory Swanson (2014-15, Mountain Vista High School, Colo.) and Kennedy Fuller (2022-23 & 2021-22, Southlake Carroll High School, Texas).

The 5-foot-10 senior midfielder and forward scored 17 goals and passed for six assists this past season, leading the Eagles (14-2-2) to the Division 1, District 3 championship game. A Michigan High School Soccer Coaches Association 2023 Dream Team selection, Aikens is also a member of the U.S. Youth Soccer Olympic Development Program National Select Team. She concluded her prep soccer career with 62 goals and 34 assists.

A talented artist in acrylics and ceramics, Aikens has volunteered locally with GLO Ministries, packing food for the homeless. A four-year member of the Hudsonville High student council, she has also donated her time to blood-donation drives to benefit the American Red Cross. "Kendall is a special player," said Eric Fracassi, head coach of Grandville High School. "She has dominated our conference over the past two years. She has the ability to create and to exploit defenders with strong one-on-one skills and technical finishing abilities. She's a huge part of their overall success."

Aikens has maintained a weighted 4.06 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at Grand Valley 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.

Aikens joins recent Gatorade Michigan Girls Soccer Players of the Year Lilley Bosley (2022-23, Stoney Creek High School), Theryn Hallock (2021-22, Forest Hills Central High School), Madison Salzenstein (2020-21, Detroit Country Day School) and Avery Fenchel (2019-20, Novi 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, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$4.9 million in grants to winners across more than 1,900 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 X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.