

ROCK HILL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE TEXAS GIRLS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 25, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Skylynn Townsend** of **Rock Hill High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Texas Girls Track & Field Player of the Year**. Townsend is the first Gatorade Texas Girls Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Rock Hill 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 Townsend as Texas' best high school girls track & field athlete. 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 Sanya Richards-Ross (2001-02, St. Thomas Aquinas High School, Fla), Sydney McLaughlin (2016-17, 2015-16 & 2014-15, Union Catholic High School, N.J.) and Angelina Napoleon (2022-23, Allegany-Limestone Central School, N.Y.).

The 5-foot-3 senior jumper won two national titles in the triple jump this past season and qualified for the World Athletics U20 Championships in Peru later this summer. At the USATF U20 Championships, Townsend soared 44 feet, 2.5 inches to capture gold—the leap was the nation's top distance among girls prep competitors this spring and ranks No. 5 in high school history. She also won the event at the Nike Outdoor Nationals to earn All-American honors. Her personal-best effort of 20-9.5 in the long jump at the USATF meet earned her a bronze medal behind two collegians and represented the No. 2 prep mark in 2024, which ranks No. 36 in prep history. She added a pair of UIL regional titles for good measure.

Townsend has volunteered locally at numerous USATF and AAU track and field meets. She has also served as an active member of her school's Black Student Union. "Skylynn Townsend soared into rarefied air at the biggest meets, landing herself as among the all-time great combo jumpers in national prep history," said Rich Gonzalez, editor of PrepCalTrack.com. "Powering safely beyond 44 feet in the triple jump to earn a spot on Team USA's World U20 roster, she went unbeaten in the triple jump on U.S. soil this season. Soaring close to 21 feet in the long jump, she proved that no field event athlete was more dominant across multiple disciplines this season."

Townsend has maintained a 3.50 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on scholarship at the University of Georgia 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.

Townsend joins recent Gatorade Texas Girls Track & Field Players of the Year Emma Sralla (2022-23, Lewisville Marcus High School), Natalie Cook (2021-22, Flower Mound High School), Jasmine Montgomery (2020-21, Reagan High School) and Brynn Brown (2019-20, Guyer 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.

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