

GILBERT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE ARIZONA BOYS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 27, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Vance Nilsson** of **Gilbert High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Arizona Boys Track & Field Player of the Year**. Nilsson is the first Gatorade Arizona Boys Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Gilbert 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 Nilsson as Arizona’s best high school boys track & field 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 Alan Webb (2000-01, South Lakes High School, Va.), Kerron Clement (2002-03, Laporte High School, Texas) and Grant Fisher (2014-15 & 2013-14, Grand Blanc High School, Mich.).

The 6-foot-3, 165-pound senior hurdler smashed the national record in the 300-meter event—a mark that had stood for 15 years—breaking the tape in 34.83 seconds this past season at the AIA Division I state meet. Nilsson was also this spring’s national leader in the 400 hurdles, winning the USATF U20 Championships title in 50.23, which is the No. 20 time in U.S. prep history. Completing the hurdling trifecta, he clocked a personal-best 13.39 in the 110 hurdles at the AIA Division 1 championships, which ranks No. 21 all-time. He broke the state record in all three hurdles events and ranks among the Top 25 nationally in history in all three as well.

A member of Gilbert High School Captains Council, which helps foster leadership and support for the athletic teams at the high school, Nilsson has volunteered locally with the Feed My Starving Children initiative, which provides food packages for those in need. He also has donated his time as a youth flag football referee. “While it’s common for a top intermediate hurdler to produce big time drops at the end of the season, Vance Nilsson pushed that to a new level,” said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack. “Slicing 1.46 seconds off his best 300-meter time during the final month of the regular season, one of the oldest individual national records on the books tumbled as a result. The real shame is that Vance’s season concluded just as he was learning the 400-meter hurdles, which he will run in college.”

Nilsson has maintained a 4.00 weighted GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on scholarship at the University of Florida 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.

Nilsson joins recent Gatorade Arizona Boys Track & Field Players of the Year Brennen McHenry (2022-23, Brophy College Preparatory), Yan Vazquez (2021-22, Red Mountain High School), Dayton Carlson (2020-21, Casteel High School) and Leo Daschbach (2019-20, Highland 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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