

AURORA CENTRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE ILLINOIS 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 **Patrick Hilby of Aurora Central Catholic High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Illinois Boys Track & Field Player of the Year**. Hilby is the first Gatorade Illinois Boys Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Aurora Central Catholic 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 Hilby as Illinois’ 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 5-foot-10, 160-pound senior middle-distance talent won a national title and set a state record in the 800-meter event at the New Balance Nationals Outdoor this past season, earning All-American honors in the process. Hilby’s time of 1:47.55 ranked No. 1 nationally among prep boys this spring and is No. 6 clocking in U.S. prep history. He also swept the 400 and 800 at the Class 3A state meet. At the national Brooks PR Invitational, he took second with a time of 1:47.92.

Hilby has volunteered more than 100 hours locally through various projects associated with the Feed My Starving Children initiative, which packages and distributes food to undernourished children worldwide. He has also donated his time at the Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry’s Community Gardens and on behalf of the Angel Tree gift-donation drive at Holy Angels Catholic Church. “It’s not often that a high-schooler can throw down a fast 800 time in the early season and remain durable enough to have great results at season’s end, but Hilby did just that in winning a national title,” said Rich Gonzalez of PrepCalTrack.

Hilby has maintained a 3.98 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on scholarship at the University of Wisconsin 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.

Hilby joins recent Gatorade Illinois Boys Track & Field Players of the Year Daniel Watcke (2022-23, Hinsdale Central High School), Ryan Watts (2021-22, Edwardsville High School), Brandon Battle (2020-21, Edwardsville High School) and Josh Methner (2019-20, John Hersey 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.