

NIXA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MISSOURI 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 **Jackson Cantwell** of **Nixa High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Missouri Boys Track & Field Player of the Year**. Cantwell is the first Gatorade Missouri Boys Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Nixa 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 Cantwell as Missouri'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-9, 300-pound sophomore throws specialist won a national title in the shot put at June's Nike Outdoor Nationals on the heels of setting a state record in the event in May. Cantwell also took fifth in the discus at NON to earn dual All-American honors. At the Class 5 District 6 meet, he launched the shot a personal-best 74 feet, 9.75 inches to break his own set record and record the No. 9 distance in the event in prep history. In addition, he recorded a personal-best in the discus this season (205-4), which ranked No. 7 among prep competitors in 2024. He won both events at the state meet, helping the Eagles finish fifth as a team.

Also a key contributor on his school's football team, Cantwell has volunteered locally serving food at the Least Of These Food Pantry, the only full-service pantry serving Christian County. He has also donated his time as a peer tutor in addition to coaching youth throwers. "Throws fans nationally are getting their fix of great talents these days, but Jackson Cantwell could be the one that really ups the ante over the next two years," said Rich Gonzalez, editor of PrepCalTrack. "The son of former world shot put champion Christian Cantwell, Jackson absolutely destroyed the sophomore class national record by more than two feet. As he enters his junior season, his career best is already farther than the national junior class record as well. He shattered the national sophomore record in the discus, too"

Cantwell has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his junior year of high school 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.

Cantwell joins recent Gatorade Missouri Boys Track & Field Players of the Year Connor Burns (2022-23 & 2021-22, Southern Boone High School), Johnny Brackins Jr. (2020-21, Lee's Summit High School) and Brandon Miller (2019-20, John Burroughs 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.