

**SIoux FALLS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE SOUTH DAKOTA 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 **Paul Hoekman** of **Sioux Falls Christian School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade South Dakota Boys Track & Field Player of the Year**. Hoekman is the first Gatorade South Dakota Boys Track & Field Player of the Year to be chosen from Sioux Falls Christian 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 Hoekman as South Dakota’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, 245-pound junior throws specialist took fourth in the shot put at the Nike Outdoor Nationals this past season, launching the apparatus a personal-best 64 feet, 4.5 inches to record the No. 23 effort nationally among boys prep competitors this spring. Hoekman also won the shot put, finished second in the discus and 8th in the javelin at the Class A State Meet, earning Field Events MVP honors. He set personal-bests in the discus (165-2) and the javelin (147-1) in 2024 and received All-America recognition at NBNO. His PR in the shot ranks ninth in state history.

Also a state powerlifting champion, a First Team All-Conference football player and member of his high school’s concert and marching bands, Hoekman has volunteered locally on behalf of the Miracle League, Crime Stoppers and Rake The Town events. As a member of his church youth group, he handles AV during services and performs maintenance and repairs at the church housing development. “Hoekman helped his team to a state championship, became an All-American and produced a Top 25 national effort in the shot put this year,” said Rich Gonzalez, editor of PrepCalTrack.com. “Setting PRs in three events, he’s set the stage for a big senior campaign.”

Hoekman has maintained a 3.56 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his senior 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.

Hoekman joins recent Gatorade South Dakota Boys Track & Field Players of the Year Simeon Birnbaum (2022-23 & 2021-22, Stevens High School), Cooper Mack (2020-21, Watertown High School) and Tyler Hiatt (2019-20, Lincoln 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.