

**SPRING GARDEN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE ALABAMA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (March 13, 2025) — In its 40<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Ace Austin of Spring Garden High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Alabama Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Austin is the first Gatorade Alabama Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Spring Garden High School.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes for their success on the court, in the classroom and in the community. The award distinguishes Austin as Alabama’s best high school girls basketball player, and she joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as Candace Parker (2002-03 & 2003-04, Naperville Central High School, Illinois), Paige Bueckers (2019-20, Hopkins High School, Minnesota) and Joyce Edwards (2023-24, Camden High School, South Carolina).

The state’s returning Gatorade State Player of the Year, the 5-foot-8 senior guard led the Panthers to a 36-1 record and a third straight Class 1A state championship this past season. Austin averaged 26.5 points and 8.2 rebounds per game, including a 40-point effort in her prep finale, a 73-43 win over Brilliant High in the state final. The two-time Class 1A Player of the Year and the state’s 2024 Miss Basketball winner, Austin is ranked as the nation’s No. 39 recruit in the Class of 2025 by 247Sports. She concluded her high school basketball career with 3,940 points, 1,430 assists, 1,379 rebounds and 861 steals, ranking No. 2 in state history in assists and steals as well as No. 7 in points.

An officer in her school’s Family, Career and Community Leaders of America chapter, Austin is a member of the yearbook staff and an Open House guide. She has volunteered locally with the Spring Garden High School Beta Club and as a youth basketball coach. “Ace is a phenomenal player and athlete,” said Deidra Cox, head coach of Cedar Bluff High School. “Her understanding and knowledge of the game is unreal. She is like having another coach out on the floor.”

Austin has maintained an A average in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play basketball at the University of Alabama this fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states across 12 different high school sports - 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.

Two-time winner Austin joins recent Gatorade Alabama Girls Basketball Players of the Year Reniya Kelly (2022-23, Hoover High School), Samiya Steele (2021-22, Hazel Green High School) and Sara Puckett (2020-21, Muscle Shoals 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 \$5.6 million in grants to winners across more than 2,000 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://www.instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X(Twitter) at [x.com/Gatorade](https://x.com/Gatorade).