

**HERNANDO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MISSISSIPPI GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 13, 2025) — In its 40th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Fran Kelly** of **Hernando High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Mississippi Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Kelly is the first Gatorade Mississippi Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Hernando 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 Kelly as Mississippi’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 5-foot-10 junior guard led the Tigers to a 22-7 record and the quarterfinals of the 7A state tournament this past season. Kelly averaged 26 points, 4.3 steals, 3.9 rebounds and 3.1 assists per game. The District 1 Player of the Year, she was also named 7A Miss Basketball by the Mississippi High School Activities Association.

Kelly has volunteered locally as a youth basketball coach the past two years. “She is a phenomenal athlete and basketball player,” said Shayne Linzy, Lafayette High School head coach. “She not only displays a high IQ for the game, but she has the ability to make plays all over the court. With all that ability, she still gets her teammates involved as much as possible.”

Kelly has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her 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 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.

Kelly joins recent Gatorade Mississippi Girls Basketball Players of the Year Macie Phifer (2023-24, Ingomar High School), Madison Booker (2022-23 & 2020-21, Germantown High School) and Debreasha Powe (2021-22, Meridian 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 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.

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