

**MILLARD WEST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE NEBRASKA 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 **Neleigh Gessert** of **Millard West High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Nebraska Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Gessert is the first Gatorade Nebraska Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Millard West 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 Gessert as Nebraska’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 6-foot-1 senior guard and forward led the Wildcats to a 28-1 record and the Class A state championship this past season. Gessert averaged 17.6 points, 5.7 rebounds, 2.5 steals and 2.2 assists, including 18 points and eight boards in a 70-44 win over Westside High School in the state final. A 2024 First Team All-State selection and a two-time First Team All-Metro honoree, Gessert is ranked as the nation’s No. 54 recruit in the Class of 2025 by 247Sports. She concluded her prep basketball career with 1,542 points.

A member of the Millard West High School student leadership team, Gessert has volunteered locally with Play It Forward, a mentoring program that introduces young children to a variety of activities. “Neleigh can not only shoot it from range very efficiently, but can also get to the rim, hit free throws, rebound, assist and block shots at a high rate,” said Ann Prince, head coach of Elkhorn South High School. “She affects so many different aspects of the game on both sides of the ball.”

Gessert has maintained a 3.55 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play basketball at Creighton University 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.

Gessert joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Girls Basketball Players of the Year Britt Prince (2023-24 & 2022-23, Elkhorn North High School), Taylor McCabe (2021-22, Fremont High School) and Alexis Markowski (2020-21, Pius X 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).