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Taft Union High School seniors Olivia Ortlieb and Cameron Ginn are the South Sequoia League CIF scholar-athletes for 2016-17. All 111 schools in the Central Section could nominate one boy and one girl based on academics and athletics. Twenty-eight winners were named from the Central Section that stretches from Madera to Tehachapi. Nine came from Kern County. Only Fowler, Mission Oak, Central Valley Christian and Taft had two students honored as scholar-athletes. Ginn and Ortlieb were the only winners from the SSL.

Both carry identical 3.94 cumulative grade point averages and both are three-sport athletes.

Ortlieb, daughter of school trustee Julie Ortlieb, has played softball all four years, has won two valley championships and has been named all-league three years and all-area the past two years. She also has played volleyball, basketball, soccer and water polo.

Ginn was a first team all-league linebacker, played football and basketball all four years and ran track the past three years.

Olivia received an academic/softball scholarship to George Washington University in Washington D.C.

Ginn received an academic scholarship to Division III Pacific University in Forest Grove, OR, about 30 miles southwest of Portland, where he will play football.

Both have spent their lives in Taft and said they will miss everyone but are looking forward to college.

In an email to staff, Athletic Director Pete Lango praised, "Please join me in congratulating these CIF scholar-athletes. A special thanks should go out to these students' teachers and counselors for the efforts in the classroom. It goes without saying that our entire campus feels a great deal of pride when our students are recognized in this way. ... Finally, I could not imagine the time these parents have put into their kids. These parents have traveled, taken care of

injuries, attended awards nights, made games, cheered for wins and learned from loses, ate many dinners away from home and made sure homework was completed.”

The 28 students will be honored at a CIF dinner in Visalia May 1.

Photo by Jim Carnal

Cameron Ginn and Olivia Ortlieb are the Central Section scholar-athletes selected from the South Sequoia League. Ginn said he broke his foot while running the hurdles.