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**WESTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEBRASKA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 6, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Peter Novoa of Westside High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Nebraska Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Novoa is the first Gatorade Nebraska Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Westside High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Novoa as Nebraska's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Novoa joins an elite alumni association of past state soccer award-winners, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel HS, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, 2002-03, East Brunswick HS, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-04, Blue Valley West HS, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire HS, Mass.), Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista HS, Colo.).

The 6-foot, 180-pound senior midfielder and forward scored 23 goals and passed for 15 assists this past season, leading the Warriors (18-2) to the Class A state championship game. Novoa recorded eight multi-goal games including six in a row to start the season. The captain of the Journal Star's Super-State Team, he concluded his prep soccer career with 49 goals and 67 assists.

A member of the Mu Alpha Theta mathematics honor society, Novoa has worked as a lifeguard, and he has volunteered locally with USA Triathlon in addition to serving as a youth soccer and basketball coach. "Peter carried that team to the finals," said Jon Shaad, head coach of Elkhorn South High. "When he is not on the field, Westside is a much different side."

A National Merit Scholar finalist, Novoa has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. He will attend the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he will play soccer, 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 work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Novoa joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Boys Soccer Players of the Year Ed Gordon (2016-17 & 2015-16, Creighton Preparatory School), Cullen Fisch (2014-15, Papillion-La Vista South), Michael Jaime (2013-14, Omaha South High School), Michael Kluver (2012-13, Skutt Catholic High School), Gabe Garbin (2011-12, Lincoln East High School), Jake Linden (2010-11, Creighton Prep), Taylor Reeves (2009-10, Creighton Preparatory School), Michael Burke (2008-09, Skutt Catholic High School), Seth Neben (2007-08, Lincoln Southwest), and Kyle Deremer (2006-07, Millard North) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Novoa will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit www.gatorade.com/poy.

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