

## **BEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NEW HAMPSHIRE BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 12, 2026) — In its 41<sup>st</sup> year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Ali Mirza of Bedford Academy High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade New Hampshire Boys Soccer Player of the Year.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes for their excellence in sport, academics and community. The award recognizes Mirza as New Hampshire’s best high school boys soccer player, and he joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Alecko Eskandarian (1999-00, Bergen Catholic High School, New Jersey), Cristian Roldan (2012-13, El Rancho High School, California) and Dan Klink (2024-25, Loyola Blakefield, Maryland).

The 5-foot-10, 152-pound senior forward scored 33 goals and passed for 10 assists this past season, leading the Bulldogs (14-1-4) to the Division I state semifinals. The Division I Player of the Year, Mirza was both the United Soccer Coaches High School State Player of the Year and a USC All-American selection. A TopDrawerSoccer.com Fall Season Best XI Third Team honoree, he concluded his prep career with 74 goals and 26 assists.

Mirza has donated his time raising mental health awareness among teens through the National Alliance on Mental Illness. He has also volunteered locally at an elder care facility and as a youth soccer coach. “Ali is crafty up top (in the final third) and has pinpoint accuracy with his shooting,” said Tom Bellen, head coach of Nashua High School South. “He places the ball for goals as well as anyone I’ve seen in a while and can also smash one by you (when circumstances dictate).”

Mirza has maintained a weighted 4.06 GPA in the classroom. He will attend Worcester Polytechnic Institute and play soccer there this fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one state winner from each of the 50 states and Washington D.C., in 12 different sports: football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, baseball, softball, boys and girls soccer, and boys and girls track & field. In total, 610 high school athletes are honored each year. From the pool of state winners, one national winner is selected in each of the 12 sports. 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 winners in each sport.

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 \$6.4 million in grants to winners across more than 2,200 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).

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