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**DIMOND HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE ALASKA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 17, 2016) — In its 31<sup>st</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Malia Lyken of Dimond High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Alaska Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Lyken is the second Gatorade Alaska Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Dimond 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 Lyken as Alaska's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Lyken joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, East Brunswick HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-3 senior forward had led the Lynx to a 12-0 record at the time of her selection. Lyken scored 19 goals and passed for 18 assists through 12 games. A First Team All-Cook Inlet Conference selection and a member of the All-State Tournament Team as a sophomore, she attended camp with the U.S. Under-19 Women's National Team this past fall.

Lyken has maintained a B average in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of the American Red Cross, Planned Parenthood and youth sports programs.

"Lyken is a really hard worker and a phenomenal athlete," said Jo Reid, head coach at East Anchorage High. "She's got the speed and tenacity to get to the goal, and she's definitely the main player in their attack."

Lyken has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Northern Arizona 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 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 high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), 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.

Lyken joins recent Gatorade Alaska Girls Soccer Players of the Year Haleigh Van Allen (2014-15, Service High School), Holly Brehmer (2013-14, Chugiak High School), Aaliyah Lewis (2012-13 & 2011-12, Dimond High School), Kelly Cobb (2010-11, Chugiak High School), Tricia Stonebraker (2009-10, Service High School), Alev Kelter (2008-09 & 2007-08, Chugiak High School), and Carly Butcher (2006-07, South Anchorage High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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