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**HOUGH HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE NORTH CAROLINA 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 Ashlynn Serepca of Hough High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade North Carolina Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Serepca is the first Gatorade North Carolina Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Hough 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 Serepca as North Carolina'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, Serepca 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-6 sophomore forward has led the Huskies to a 16-4-1 record and a berth in the third round of the Class 4A state tournament against Providence High, scheduled for May 18. Serepca has scored 33 goals and passed for 14 assists. A member of the U.S. Soccer Under-16 Girls National Team player pool, Serepca was a 2015 First Team All-State selection. She enters the Providence game with 57 goals and 26 assists in her prep soccer career.

Serepca has maintained a weighted 4.45 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach and as part of multiple community service initiatives through her church youth group.

"Ashlynn Serepca is certainly the real deal," said Mike Kutcher, head coach of North Mecklenburg High. "She is by far, in my opinion, the best player in the state. She is skilled and very strong on the ball. Simply put, she can just take over games."

Serepca has made a verbal commitment to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at the University of Virginia beginning in the fall of 2018.

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.

Serepca joins recent Gatorade North Carolina Girls Soccer Players of the Year Brianna Pinto (2014-15, Jordan High School), Morgan Reid (2013-14, Cardinal Gibbons High School), Alexis Shaffer (2012-13 & 2011-12, Green Hope High School), Caroline Lindquist (2010-11, Ravenscroft School), Mollie Pathman (2009-10 & 2008-09, Durham Academy), Nicole Danford (2007-08, Green Hope High School), and Nicole Panek (2006-07, Mount Tabor 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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