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## **GATORADE® NATIONAL BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR: OUSSENI BOUDA**

*Gatorade Surprises Winner with Honor in Front of Family and Friends*

**Millbrook, N.Y.** (June 6, 2018) – In its 33<sup>rd</sup> year of honoring the nation’s best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Ousseni Bouda of Millbrook High School, Millbrook, N.Y. as its 2017-18 Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Bouda was surprised with the news in front of family and friends while attending an event for the Right to Dream Academy in New York City.

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 Bouda as the nation’s best high school boys soccer player. A national advisory panel comprised of sport-specific experts and sports journalists helped select Bouda from nearly 432,000 high school boys soccer players nationwide. Bouda is now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade Male High School Athlete of the Year award, to be presented at a special ceremony prior to The ESPY Awards in July.

The 5-foot-11, 165-pound junior forward scored 49 goals and passed for 4 assists this past season, leading the Mustangs (9-8-2) to the to the New England Prep School Athletic Council Class C finals this past season. A two-time prep school All-Star, Bouda already owns his school’s career scoring record for goals scored (92) and was named to the “Second XI” by the New England Soccer Journal. He tallied 80 percent of his team’s scores in his junior year.

A dorm leader at his school, Bouda has served as an advisor for international students at Millbrook and has collected used sports equipment to be sent to children in his country of origin, Burkina Faso.

“Ousseni Bouda is a rare combination of speed and skill,” says Sheldon Shealer, High School Soccer Editor for [TopDrawerSoccer.com](http://TopDrawerSoccer.com). “An elite attacker, he’s able to create space with incredible footwork on the ball, or he can simply run right past defenders. No doubt, he’s one of the most exciting and talented players to watch in the high school game.”

Bouda has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom. He will begin his senior year of high school this fall.

“Ousseni is an exceptional student-athlete who has earned recognition as the nation’s best high school boys soccer player while also excelling in the classroom and making a difference in his native Burkina Faso,” said Gatorade Senior Vice President and General Manager Brett O’Brien. “Ousseni’s statistics on the field speak for themselves, but even more impressive is the impact he has had on his teammates and the example he sets for younger student-athletes. Ousseni represents everything we look to celebrate in a Gatorade Player of the Year recipient.”

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Bouda also has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of his choosing. He is also eligible to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for his organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

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 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.

Former notable Gatorade National Players of the Year include:

- Super Bowl Most Valuable Player Peyton Manning
- 2015 NBA first overall pick Karl-Anthony Towns
- Three-time WNBA champion Maya Moore
- Seven-time track & field gold medalist Allyson Felix
- Three-time beach volleyball gold medalist Kerri Walsh
- Three-time Cy Young Award winner Clayton Kershaw

For more information on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of former winners, and future announcement dates, visit the Gatorade Player of the Year Web site at <http://www.gatorade.com/poy>, on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

**ALL-TIME GATORADE NATIONAL BOYS SOCCER PLAYERS OF THE YEAR**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
2017-18	Ousseni Bouda	Millbrook High School, Millbrook, N.Y.	High School Junior
2016-17	Umar Farouk Osman	The Hotchkiss School, Lakeville, CT	University of Michigan
2015-16	Lucas Mendes	Washington-Lee High School, Washington, D.C.	FC Baltimore
2014-15	Jack Harrison	Berkshire School, Sheffield, MA	Middlesbrough FC
2013-14	Abu Danladi	Dunn School, Los Olivos, CA	Minnesota United
2012-13	Cristian Roldan	El Rancho High School, Pico Rivera, CA	Seattle Sounders FC
2011-12	Ema Boateng	Cate School, Capintaria, CA	LA Galaxy
2010-11	Luis Rendon	Cosby High School, Midlothian, VA	Duke University Grad
2009-10	Soony Saad	Dearborn High School, Dearborn, MI	Sporting Kansas City
2008-09	Dillon Powers	Plano High School, Plano, TX	Colorado Rapids
2007-08	Chris Agorsor	McDonogh School, Owings Mills, MD	USL PRO Free Agent
2006-07	Brayan Martinez	West Orange High School, West Orange, NJ	Puebla FC (Mexico)
2005-06	Eric Alexander	Portage Central high School, Portage, MI	Houston Dynamo
2004-05	Lee Nguyen	Plano East High School, Plano, TX	New England Rev.
2003-04	Patrick Phelan	Wilbraham & Monson, Wilbraham, MA	Retired from MLS
2002-03	Greg Dalby	Poway High School, Poway, CA	Davidson Coll. Staff
2001-02	Jordan Harvey	Capistrano Valley HS, Mission Viejo, CA	Vancouver Whitecaps
2000-01	Ned Grabavoy	Lincoln Way High School, New Lenox, IL	Retired from MLS
1999-00	Alecko Eskandarian	Bergen Catholic High School, Oradell, NJ	N.Y. Cosmos Staff
1998-99	Kyle Martino	Staples High School, Westport, CT	Retired from MLS
1997-98	Nick Downing	Eastlake High School, Redmond, WA	New Eng. Rev. Staff
1996-97	Nick Garcia	Bishop Lynch High School, Dallas, TX	Retired from MLS
1995-96	Andy Kirk	Marquette Univ., Milwaukee, WI	Retired from MLS
1994-95	Pierre Venditti	Jonathon Law High School, Milford, CT	Maryland Grad
1993-94	Andriy Shapowal	Kenston High School, Chagrin Falls, OH	Virginia Grad
1992-93	Mike Fisher	Batavia High School, Batavia, IL	Virginia Grad
1991-92	Matt McKeon	De Smet Jesuit, St. Louis, MO	Retired from MLS
1990-91	Claudio Reyna	St. Benedict's Prep, Newark, NJ	NY FC Dir. of Ops
1988-89	Chris Henderson	Cascade High School, Everett, WA	Seattle Sounders Staff
1987-88	Lyle Yorks	E.O. Smith High School, Storrs, CT	Retired from MISL
1986-87	John Gwin	Boise High School, Boise, ID	Duke University Grad
1985-86	Kevin Hundelt	Aquinas-Mercy, Hazelwood, MO	Retired from MISL

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