

MOUNTAIN BROOK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE ALABAMA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 16, 2022) — In its 37<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Jack Heaps of Mountain Brook High School is the 2021-22 Gatorade Alabama Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Heaps is the fourth Gatorade Alabama Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Mountain Brook 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 Heaps as Alabama’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, Heaps joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook High School, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel High School, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy School of Young Women, N.Y.), Heather O’Reilly (2001-02 & 2002-03, East Brunswick High School, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-05, Blue Valley West High School, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire High School, Mass.) and Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista High School, Colo.).

The 5-foot-9, 140-pound junior midfielder scored 33 goals and passed for five assists this past season, leading Mountain Brook (25-2-2) to the Class 6A state championship. Heaps is a First Team Super All-State and First Team All-Metro selection. He is also a United Soccer Coaches All-Region honoree.

A member of the National Honor Society, the Spanish Honor Society and the Mu Alpha Theta math honor society, Heaps has volunteered locally on behalf of St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church. “Jack Heaps is a very lethal attacking midfielder,” said Julian Kersh, head coach at Homewood High. “He doesn’t look physically imposing, but he’s extremely athletic and his vertical lets him get headers over taller players. His left-footed strike is just as powerful as his right, and he’s not afraid to put in a crunching tackle if he needs to.”

Heaps has maintained a weighted 4.32 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his senior year of high school 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Heaps joins recent Gatorade Alabama Boys Soccer Players of the Year Jackson Nabors (2020-21, Indian Springs School), Tony Shaw (2019-20, Vestavia Hills High School), Logan Frost (2018-19, Briarwood Christian School), and Brooks Rice (2017-18, Spain Park High School), among the state’s list of former award winners.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade’s “Play it Forward” platform, Heaps has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. Heaps is also eligible to submit a short video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners’ grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

Since the program’s inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

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 Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY), Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade) and Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).

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