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**ABERDEEN CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE SOUTH DAKOTA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 12, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Marcus Hluchy of Aberdeen Central High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade South Dakota Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Hluchy is the first Gatorade South Dakota Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Aberdeen Central 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 Hluchy as South Dakota'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, Hluchy joins an elite alumni association of past state soccer award-winners, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel HS, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, 2002-03, East Brunswick HS, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-04, Blue Valley West HS, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire HS, Mass.), Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista HS, Colo.).

The state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 5-foot-6, 145-pound senior midfielder led the Golden Eagles to a 15-0 record and the Class AA state championship this past season. Hluchy scored 10 goals and passed for one of his 14 assists in Aberdeen Central's 5-1 win over RC Stevens High School in the state final. A two-time First Team All-State selection, he is a member of the U.S. Youth Soccer Region II Olympic Development Program team.

Hluchy has volunteered locally with the Feeding America Backpack Program, which provides nutritious meals for children, and as a youth soccer coach and referee. He has also donated his time as part of multiple community-service initiatives through his church youth group. "Marcus has a capacity to see the field and make his entire team that much stronger," said Steve Binkley, head coach of Brookings High. "He was a multi-dimensional threat."

Hluchy has maintained a 3.54 GPA in the classroom. He remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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 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.

Hluchy joins Gatorade South Dakota Boys Soccer Player of the Year Lee Wynja (2014-15 2013-14, Sioux Falls Christian High School), as the only state's former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Marcus will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

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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