

**Contact: Kelsey Rhoney (312-729-3685)**

**PENN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE INDIANA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 19, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Kristina Lynch of Penn High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Indiana Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Lynch is the first Gatorade Indiana Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Penn 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 Lynch as Indiana'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 June, Lynch 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 5-foot-8 junior midfielder and forward led the Kingsmen to a 22-0-1 record and the Class 2A state championship this past season. Lynch scored 38 goals and passed for 26 assists, tallying one of each in Penn's 2-0 win over Brebeuf Jesuit High in the state final. Lynch recorded 12 goals and 13 assists in Penn's seven-game postseason run to the state title. A two-time Indiana Soccer Coaches Association First Team All-State selection, she concluded her junior year with school records of 86 goals and 49 assists in her prep soccer career.

A member of the Penn High student council, Lynch has volunteered locally at a center for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and as a youth soccer coach. She has also donated her time writing letters of encouragement to hospital patients. "Kristina is not only a good individual player, she also has that rare talent of making everyone around her better," said Tim Barwick, head coach of Mishawaka High School. "As a coach, that is one of my measures of greatness. That is what Kristina did for Penn."

Lynch has maintained a weighted 4.11 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play soccer on scholarship at Florida State University 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 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.

Lynch joins recent Gatorade Indiana Girls Soccer Players of the Year Alia Martin (2015-16, Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School), Reilly Martin (2014-15, Brebeuf Jesuit), Cassidy Blacha (2013-14, Avon High School), Gracie Lachowecki (2012-13, Reitz Memorial Catholic High School), Brooke Backes (2011-12, Carmel High School), Sarah Killion (2010-11, Bishop Dwenger High School), Sarah Killion (2009-10 & 2008-09, Bishop Dwenger High School), Ashley Auld (2007-08, Noblesville High School), and Julie Scheidler (2006-07, Bishop Chatard High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Kristina 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).

###