

**CONESTOGA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE PENNSYLVANIA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 6, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Chris Donovan of Conestoga High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Donovan is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Conestoga 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 Donovan as Pennsylvania'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, Donovan 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 6-foot-1, 155-pound senior forward led the Pioneers to a 25-0-1 record and the Class AAAA state championship this past season. Donovan scored 56 goals and passed for nine assists, including all four goals in Conestoga's 4-0 shutout of Hempfield High in the state final. Donovan tallied 16 goals and one assist in eight postseason games. An All-American selection by United Soccer Coaches, he concluded his prep soccer career with a school-record 81 goals to go with 26 assists.

Donovan is the president of the Conestoga Footy Club, which raises money for Starfinder, an organization that provides for underprivileged children. He has volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach and has donated his time as part of multiple community service initiatives through his church. "I've never seen someone put up such numbers in a season against such a tough schedule," said Biff Sturla, head coach of Harriton High. "Plus, four goals in the state final? That is unreal."

Donovan has maintained a weighted 4.63 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at Drexel University beginning 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 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.

Donovan joins recent Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Soccer Players of the Year David Egbo (2016-17, The Kiski School), Evan Vare (2015-16, Central Bucks East High School), Robbie Mertz (2014-15, Upper St. Clair High School), Colten Habecker (2013-14, The Hill School), Brett Campbell (2012-13 & 2011-12, The Haverford School), Zach Batteer (2010-11, Mt. Lebanon High School), Joseph Schmid (2009-10, Wyoming Valley West High School), Andrew Wenger (2008-09, Warwick High School), Shane Pruitt (2007-08, Peters Township High School), and Bobby Warshaw (2006-07, Mechanicsburg High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Donovan 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.

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