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CENTENNIAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE IDAHO GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 18, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Makayla Christensen of Centennial High School** as its **2017-18 Gatorade Idaho Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Christensen is the second Gatorade Idaho Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Centennial 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 Christensen as Idaho'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, Christensen 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 (2004-05, Blue Valley West HS, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire HS, Mass.) and Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista HS, Colo.).

The 5-foot-7 senior forward led the Patriots to a 19-2 record and the Class 5A state championship this past season. Christensen scored 44 goals and passed for 17 assists, including a two-goal, two-assist effort in a 4-0 win over Mountain View High in the state title game. She led Class 5A in both goals and assists. Also the Class 5A State Player of the Year, Christensen is a three-time First Team All-State selection and participated in the High School All-American Game this past December. She concluded her prep soccer career with 90 goals and 33 assists.

Christensen has volunteered locally at a rehabilitation center as a nursing assistant and is in the process of completing her formal training to be a certified nursing assistant and an EMT. She has also donated her time as a youth soccer coach. "Makayla was easily the best player in the state this year," said Alyssa Gentle, head coach of Mountain View High. "She is a very fluid player—every run, every pass, every shot just looks so natural for her. Makayla is the kid that every coach wants on their team."

Christensen has maintained a 3.84 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Utah 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.

Christensen joins recent Gatorade Idaho Girls Soccer Players of the Year Lauren Bouvia (2016-17 & 2015-16, Weiser High School), Sophia Kallas (2014-15, Boise High School), Raimee Sherle (2013-14, Rocky Mountain High School), Kelcie Hedge (2012-13, Post Falls High School), Brooke Heidemann (2011-12, Rocky Mountain High School), Sofia Huerta (2010-11 & 2009-10, Centennial High School), Miah Mollay (2008-09, Boise High School), Halley Kreminski (2007-08, Eagle High School), and Brandy Hickcox (2006-07, Capital) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Christensen 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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