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PENN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE INDIANA 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 **Kristina Lynch of Penn High School** as its **2017-18 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 (2004-05, Blue Valley West HS, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire HS, Mass.), and Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista HS, Colo.).

The state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 5-foot-8 senior midfielder and forward led the Kingsmen to a 23-0-1 record and the Class 3A state championship this past season. Lynch scored 44 goals and passed for 19 assists, setting up both goals in Penn's 2-0 win over Guerin Catholic High in the state final. Lynch recorded 11 goals and nine assists in Penn's seven-game postseason run to the state title. The Indiana Soccer Coaches Association's Miss Soccer, Lynch was the 2017 United Soccer Coaches National Player of the Year. She concluded her prep soccer career with 130 goals and 68 assists.

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 to Kingsmen Against Cancer and the Handwritten Hearts Club, writing letters to both hospital and cancer patients. "I have spent the last four years as an opposing coach who has tried to strategize a way to contain her," said Caryn MacKenzie, head coach of South Bend Adams High. "You know every single touch she gets on the ball could be a potential goal or assist."

Lynch maintained an unweighted 4.16 GPA in the classroom. Taking advantage of NCAA early signing rules, Lynch inked a financial-aid agreement that paved the way for her to enroll at Florida State University. She graduated from high school in January and attended classes this past spring semester.

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.

Two-time winner Lynch joins Gatorade Indiana Girls Soccer Players of the Year Alia Martin (2015-16, Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School), Reilly Martin (2014-15, Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School), 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, 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, Lynch 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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