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ROCKWOOD SUMMIT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MISSOURI 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 **Anna Lawler of Rockwood Summit High School** as its **2017-18 Gatorade Missouri Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Lawler is the first Gatorade Missouri Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Rockwood Summit 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 Lawler as Missouri'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, Lawler 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 2015-16 Gatorade Player of the Year, the 5-foot-10 senior defender and midfielder led the Falcons to a 19-2-3 record and the Class 3 state championship this past season. Lawler scored six goals, passed for six assists and led a defense that allowed just 10 goals and closed the season with 10 straight shutouts. A three-time Class 3 First Team All-State selection, she is a two-time United Soccer Coaches All-American honoree.

Lawler has volunteered locally with a special needs soccer program, and she has donated her time to multiple community-service initiatives through her school's National Honor Society. "Anna just impacts the game in all facets," said Jason Sellers, head coach of Pattonville High. "She plays in back but would be the best central mid around, too. She shuts down attacks and starts transitions."

Lawler has maintained a weighted 4.19 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at Oklahoma State University 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.

Two-time winner Lawler joins recent Gatorade Missouri Girls Soccer Players of the Year Kirsten Davis (2016-17, Westminster Christian Academy), Dorian Bailey (2014-15 & 2013-14, St. Teresa's Academy), Jaycie Johnson (2012-13, Lee's Summit West High School), Allie Stephenson (2011-12, Lee's Summit North High School), Shea Groom (2010-11 & 2009-10, Liberty High School), Morgan Marlborough (2008-09, Lee's Summit North High School), Molly Campbell (2007-08, St. Teresa's Academy), and Lauren Fowlkes (2006-07, St. Teresa's Academy) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Lawler 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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