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BEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NEW HAMPSHIRE 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 **Brianna CoCo of Bedford High School** as its **2017-18 Gatorade New Hampshire Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. CoCo is the first Gatorade New Hampshire Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Bedford 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 CoCo as New Hampshire'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, CoCo 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-6 junior anchored a defense that allowed just seven goals this past season, leading the Bulldogs (15-2-2) to the Division I state championship game. Bedford recorded shutouts in 13 of 19 games, including nine straight to end the season. CoCo and the Bulldogs lost the state final to Manchester Central High in a shootout after a scoreless draw. A two-time First Team All-State honoree, she was a 2017 All-American selection by United Soccer Coaches.

CoCo has volunteered locally with Habitat for Humanity and at a childcare center. "CoCo is an intelligent, hard-nosed defender who reads the game very well," said Derek Dane, head coach of Londonderry High. "She keeps her team organized and on the same page. She's the best defender we've played against in the last five-plus years."

CoCo has maintained a weighted 3.63 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school 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.

CoCo joins recent Gatorade New Hampshire Girls Soccer Players of the Year Bailey Kolinski (2016-17, Brewster Academy), Gabi Brummett (2015-16, 2014-15 & 2013-14, The Derryfield School), Morgan Andrews (2012-13, 2011-12 & 2010-11, Milford High School), Kailey Blain (2009-10 & 2008-09, Merrimack High School), Kristy Zurmuhlen (2007-08, Fall Mountain Regional High School), and Lindsey Miller (2006-07, Bishop Guertin High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, CoCo 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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