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INDIAN HILL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE OHIO 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 Podojil of Indian Hill High School** as its **2017-18 Gatorade Ohio Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Podojil is the first Gatorade Ohio Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Indian Hill 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 Podojil as Ohio'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, Podojil 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-5 junior forward led the Braves to a 22-0-1 record and the Division II state championship this past season. Podojil scored 38 goals and passed for 17 assists, including a goal in Indian Hill's 2-0 win over Lake Catholic High in the state final. The Ohio Scholastic Soccer Coaches Association's Ms. Soccer, Podojil is a member of the U.S. Soccer Under-18 Women's National Team player pool. She concluded her junior year with a school-record 89 goals to go with 42 assists in her prep soccer career.

Podojil has volunteered locally as a youth soccer and basketball coach. "Anna is such a dynamic player," said Ben Kirkpatrick, head coach of Archbishop McNicholas High. "Not only is she extremely fast and physically hard to contain, she is also very composed in front of goal and has strong technical skills."

Podojil has maintained a weighted 4.06 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Arkansas beginning in the fall of 2019.

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.

Podojil joins recent Gatorade Ohio Girls Soccer Players of the Year Sofia Rossi (2016-17, Walsh Jesuit High School), Malia Berkely (2015-16 & 2014-15, Badin High School), Abby Elinsky (2013-14, Rocky River High School), Sandra Yu (2012-13 & 2010-11, Walsh Jesuit High School), Ashley Meier (2011-12, Strongsville High School), Elizabeth Burchenal (2009-10 & 2008-09, St. Ursula Academy), Tahnai Annis (2007-08, Pickerington High School North), and Rose Augustin (2006-07, Walsh Jesuit High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Podojil 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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