

LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE® MICHIGAN BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (March 26, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Emoni Bates of Lincoln High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Michigan Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Bates is the first Gatorade Michigan Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Lincoln 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 Bates as Michigan's best high school boys basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Basketball Player of the Year award, Bates joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Karl-Anthony Towns (2012-13 & 2013-14, St. Joseph High School, N.J.), Dwight Howard (2003-04, Southwest Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.), Chris Bosh (2001-02, Lincoln High School, Texas), Paul Pierce (1994-95, Inglewood High School, Calif.), Chauncey Billups (1993-94 & 1994-95, George Washington High School, Colo.) and Jason Kidd (1991-92, St. Joseph Notre Dame High School, Calif.).

The state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 6-foot-9, 180-pound sophomore forward led the Railsplitters to an 18-3 record and a berth in the Division 1, District 18 tournament semifinals at the time of his selection. Bates averaged 33.1 points, 9.1 rebounds, 2.9 assists and 2.3 steals. The 2019 Ann Arbor News Player of the Year, Bates was also the 2019 MaxPreps National Freshman of the Year. Ranked as the nation's No. 1 recruit among all high-school-age players by ESPN.com, he entered the district semifinals with 1,343 points in his prep basketball career.

Bates has volunteered locally on elementary school literacy outreach campaigns and as a youth basketball coach. He has also donated his time collecting clothes and shoes to give to community churches and groups in need. "Emoni is the best player I have seen at the high school level in my 23 years around the game," said Josh Tropea, head coach of Chelsea High. "His length, speed, range and uncanny ability to find the ball off the rim whenever he wants makes him unguardable at the high-school level."

Bates has maintained a B average in the classroom. He will begin his junior year of high school this fall.

Two-time winner Bates joins Gatorade Michigan Boys Basketball Players of the Year Foster Loyer (2017-18, Clarkston High School), Isaiah Livers (2016-17, Kalamazoo Central High School), Cassius Winston (2015-16, University of Detroit Jesuit High School), and Deyonta Davis (2014-15, Muskegon High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

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.

The 2019-2020 Gatorade National Boys Basketball Player of the Year announcement has been temporarily postponed due to the Coronavirus pandemic. To ensure the safety of everyone involved, The Gatorade Company will follow the guidance of experts and health officials as it determines the appropriate time to announce this year's winner.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Bates also has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of his choosing. He is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit www.Gatorade.com/POY, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

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