

**RUSSELLVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ARKANSAS BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 8, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Dylan Rice of Russellville High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Arkansas Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Rice is the second Gatorade Arkansas Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Russellville 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 Rice as Arkansas's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Rice joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook High School, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel High School, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy School of Young Women, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, 2002-03, East Brunswick High School, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-05, Blue Valley West High School, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire High School, Mass.) and Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista High School, Colo.).

The 5-foot-7, 150-pound senior forward and midfielder scored two goals and passed for four assists in seven games this spring before the remainder of the season was cancelled. An All-State selection, Rice recorded 27 goals and 38 assists in 2019, leading the Cyclones (19-5-2) to their second consecutive Class 5A state championship. He concluded his prep career with 63 goals and 69 assists, and earned All-Conference honors each of the past three seasons.

A devoted member of his church community, Rice has volunteered locally helping to feed the homeless and coaching youth soccer players. "Dylan Rice has an unrivaled pace combined with an incredible work rate," said Luke Shoemaker, head coach at Siloam Springs High. "They are back-to-back state champs in large part due to his contributions. His ability to fly down the left wing and feed balls into the box makes coaches change their game plans."

Rice has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. He will attend the University of Central Arkansas.

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.

Rice joins recent Gatorade Arkansas Boys Soccer Players of the Year Jose Vega (2018-19 & 2017-18, Springdale High School), Jose 'Lalo' Castro (2016-17, Bentonville High School), Brady Rosenow (2015-16, Conway High School) and Chris Holmes (2014-15 & 2013-14, Catholic High School for Boys) among the state's list of former award winners.

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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