

**DUTCHTOWN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE LOUISIANA 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 Zayne Zezulka of Dutchtown High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Louisiana Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Zezulka is the first Gatorade Louisiana Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Dutchtown 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 Zezulka as Louisiana'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, Zezulka 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 6-foot, 170-pound senior forward scored 43 goals and passed for seven assists this past season, leading the Griffins (20-6-1) to the semifinals of the Division 1 state tournament. A three-time First Team All-State selection, Zezulka was the state Division 1 Offensive MVP and the All-Metro MVP.

Zezulka has volunteered locally on behalf of an animal shelter, a food bank and a soccer program for children with special needs. "Zayne Zezulka is an excellent player and this year was an exceptional one for him," said Hubie Collins, head coach at Jesuit High. "He can score goals at will with his left foot or right foot, and he's especially dangerous in the air."

Zezulka has maintained a weighted 4.52 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Furman University (S.C.).

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.

Zezulka joins recent Gatorade Louisiana Boys Soccer Players of the Year Conner Walmsley (2018-19, St. Paul's School), Shane Lanson (2017-18, Jesuit High School), Josh Hughes (2016-17, Westminster Christian Academy), Colin Ross (2015-16, St. Paul's School), Colin Hanley (2014-15, St. Paul's School), and Andrew Malinich (2013-14, Lusher Charter School) 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.

###