

**HERITAGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NORTH CAROLINA 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 Landon Sloan of Heritage High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade North Carolina Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Sloan is the first Gatorade North Carolina Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Heritage 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 Sloan as North Carolina'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, Sloan 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-11, 160-pound senior midfielder and defender recorded 11 goals and 12 assists this past season, leading the Huskies (16-6-3) to the second round of the Class 4A state tournament. The North Carolina Soccer Coaches Association Player of the Year in his only season of playing high school soccer, Sloan previously played for North Carolina FC in the U.S. Soccer Development Academy. He is ranked as the nation's No. 94 prospect in the Class of 2020 by TopDrawerSoccer.com.

Sloan participated in a class called Physical Education Pupil Instruction, which allowed him to teach PE to high school special needs students. He has volunteered locally as a peer tutor and youth soccer coach. "Landon was versatile and he was reliable in difficult situations," said Matt Edwards, head coach of Millbrook School. "He made all of his teammates better, and he could affect games in multiple ways, not just through scoring."

Sloan maintained a weighted 4.36 GPA in the classroom. Taking advantage of NCAA early signing rules, Sloan inked a financial aid agreement that paved the way for him to enroll at Creighton University. He graduated from high school in December and recently completed his first semester at Creighton.

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.

Sloan joins recent Gatorade North Carolina Boys Soccer Players of the Year Cannon Tootle (2018-19, Swansboro High School), Izaiah Vignali (2017-18, A.C. Reynolds High School), Camden Holbrook (2016-17, Green Hope High School), Nick Hughes (2015-16, Franklin Academy), Clayton Sparks (2014-15, Jacksonville High School), and Austin Stamey (2013-14, T.C. Roberson High 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.

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