

**BISMARCK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NORTH DAKOTA 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 Mason Stotz of Bismarck High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade North Dakota Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Stotz is the fifth Gatorade North Dakota Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Bismarck 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 Stotz as North Dakota'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, Stotz 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 defender scored seven goals and passed for four assists this past season, leading the Demons (15-1-3) to the state championship. A two-time First Team All-State selection, Stotz was named the Western Dakota Association soccer Senior Athlete of the Year.

Also a football standout, Stotz has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics and his school's Inclusive Sports program. "Mason Stotz willed his team to a lot of big victories," said Creighton Bachmeier, head coach of Minot High School. "There's no position that he can't play and his work ethic on the field causes a lot of problems for opposing teams."

Stotz has maintained a 3.96 GPA in the classroom. He will attend Concordia College (Minn.), where he will play soccer.

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.

Stotz joins recent Gatorade North Dakota Boys Soccer Players of the Year Telvin Vah (2018-19, West Fargo High School), Tresor Mugwaneza (2017-18, Bismarck High School), Jake Reinholz (2016-17, Shanley High School), Bryce Nybo (2015-16, Bismarck High School), Jacob Richter (2014-15, Century High School), and Brad Kelly (2013-14, Century 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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