

**DIMOND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ALASKA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 17, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Kana Mateaki of Dimond High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Alaska Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Mateaki is the fourth Gatorade Alaska Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Dimond 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 Mateaki as Alaska's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Mateaki 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 senior forward scored 30 goals and passed for 19 assists in her two varsity seasons. An Allstate All-America selection, Mateaki posted 17 goals and eight assists in 2019, netting the game-winning goal for the Lynx (14-3) in the Division I state championship game. A two-time All-Region honoree, she was also named to the All-State Tournament team.

A devoted member of her church community, Mateaki has served as a mentor for younger students and has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics and youth soccer programs. "Kana Mateaki is just a great all-around player and person," said Dimond coach Tim Valesko. "She's a good finisher with very good technical skills and she works extremely hard. She was absolutely integral to us winning a state championship."

Mateaki has maintained a 3.90 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer at Eastern Oregon University.

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.

Mateaki joins recent Gatorade Alaska Girls Soccer Players of the Year Malia Miller (2018-19, Juneau-Douglas High School), Jordan Foraker (2017-18, South Anchorage High School), Kelsey Eagle (2016-17, Dimond High School), Malia Lyken (2015-16, Dimond High School), Haleigh Van Allen (2014-15, Service High School), and Holly Brehmer (2013-14, Chugiak 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.