

**HUNTERDON CENTRAL REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEW JERSEY 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 Emily Mason of Hunterdon Central Regional High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade New Jersey Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Mason is the first Gatorade New Jersey Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Hunterdon Central Regional 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 Mason as New Jersey'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, Mason 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-9 junior defender and midfielder led the Red Devils to a 21-1-1 record and the Group 4 state championship this past season. Mason recorded nine goals and three assists, including the lone score in a 1-0 win over unbeaten Eastern Regional High in the state semifinals. She also anchored a defense that surrendered just nine goals in 23 games. A member of the U.S. Soccer Under-20 Women's National Team, Mason was a starting fullback in February as the U.S. team qualified for the 2021 Under-20 Women's World Cup. The 2019 NJ.com State Player of the Year, she is ranked as the nation's No. 3 recruit in the Class of 2021 by TopDrawerSoccer.com.

A participant in the Hunterdon Outreach Program supporting special needs children through athletics, Mason has volunteered locally on behalf of the Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, including mentoring in the church's Children's Liturgy of the Word initiative. "Emily Mason is the best player we played against all season," said Kevin Ewing, head coach of Scotch Plains-Fanwood High. "We faced them twice and each time she was a major reason we could not do much offensively. She is physically dominating on the field and has a good first touch and excellent field vision."

Mason has maintained a B average in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play soccer on scholarship at Rutgers University beginning in the fall of 2021.

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.

Mason joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Girls Soccer Players of the Year Kelli McGroarty (2018-19, Eastern Regional High School), Amy Paternoster (2017-18, Wall High School), Frankie Tagliaferri (2016-17, 2015-16, Colts Neck High School), Hana Kerner (2014-15, Northern Highlands Regional High School), and Caroline Chagares (2013-14, Ramapo 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.