

**MORGANTOWN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WEST VIRGINIA 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 Sammie Brown of Morgantown High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade West Virginia Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Brown is the third Gatorade West Virginia Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Morgantown 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 Brown as West Virginia'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, Brown 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-3 senior midfielder led the Mohigans to a 20-2-1 record and the Class AAA state championship this past season. Brown recorded 25 goals and 21 assists, including one of each in Morgantown's 3-2 win over Hedgesville High in the state final. The daughter of West Virginia University women's soccer coach Nikki Izzo-Brown, she was the 2019 Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Player of the Year and a three-time First Team All-State selection. She concluded her prep soccer career with 70 goals and 61 assists.

The Morgantown High Homecoming Queen, Brown has volunteered locally with Nuru International, which fights extreme poverty, and as a youth soccer coach. "Sammie is just at another level," said Ryan Wells, head coach of Oak Glen High School. "From her skill set to her anticipation and even her ability to control the pace of a game on her own, she's the best player we saw all year. Everything ran through her from the midfield."

Brown has maintained a 3.94 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Auburn 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.

Brown joins recent Gatorade West Virginia Girls Soccer Players of the Year McKenzie Moran (2018-19, St. Joseph Central Catholic High School), Emilie Charles (2017-18, Cabell Midland High School), Mary Lawman (2016-17, Winfield High School), Jordan Pauley (2015-16, Winfield High School), and Jayne Lawman (2014-15 & 2013-14, Winfield 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.