

**CHEYENNE EAST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WYOMING FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 13, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Graedyn Buell of Cheyenne East High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Wyoming Football Player of the Year. Buell is the fifth Gatorade Wyoming Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Cheyenne East 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 Buell as Wyoming's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Buell joins an elite group of past state football award-winners, including Emmitt Smith (1986-87, Escambia High School, Fla.), Matthew Stafford (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas) and Christian McCaffrey (2012-13 & 2013-14, Valor Christian High School, Colo.).

The 6-foot-3, 200-pound senior quarterback passed for 3,065 yards and 38 touchdowns this past season, leading the Thunderbirds (11-1) to the Class 4A state championship. Buell completed 199 of 293 passes, throwing just five interceptions, while also rushing for 968 yards and 15 touchdowns on 144 carries. The two-time Casper Star-Tribune Super 25 Offensive Player of the Year, he was also the Class 4A Offensive Player of the Year.

Also a basketball standout, Buell has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics, youth sports programs and a children's literacy initiative. "Graedyn Buell is probably the most accomplished quarterback to come out of the state of Wyoming in a long time," said Mark Lenhardt, head coach at Rock Springs High School. "There's no one who compares to him in terms of impacting a game."

Buell has maintained a 3.32 GPA in the classroom. He remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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 works with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Buell joins recent Gatorade Wyoming Football Players of the Year Garrett Coon (2019-20, Sheridan High School), Parker Christensen (2018-19, Sheridan High School), Brett Brenton (2017-18, Natrona County High School), and Coy Steel (2016-17, Sheridan High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Buell has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Buell is also eligible to submit a 30-second video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$2.7 million across 1,117 organizations.

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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com, on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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