

**WILBRAHAM & MONSON ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MASSACHUSETTS BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 4, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Kyle Filipowski of Wilbraham & Monson Academy as its 2020-21 Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Filipowski is the first Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Wilbraham & Monson Academy.

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 Filipowski as Massachusetts' best high school boys basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Basketball Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Filipowski joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Jayson Tatum (2015-16, Chaminade College Preparatory School, Mo.), Karl-Anthony Towns (2012-13 & 2013-14, St. Joseph High School, N.J.), Jabari Parker (2011-12, Simeon Career Academy, Ill.) and Dwight Howard (2003-04, Southwest Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.).

The 6-foot-10, 230-pound junior forward and center averaged 21.0 points and 13.2 rebounds this past season, leading the Titans to a 5-0 record. Filipowski also recorded 5.2 assists, 2.0 steals and 1.0 blocks per game while connecting on 56.3 percent of his field-goal attempts. Ranked as the nation's No. 39 recruit in the Class of 2022 by ESPN.com, Filipowski averaged 20.1 points and 10.5 rebounds as a sophomore, leading the Titans to the 2020 New England Prep School Athletic Council Class AA championship and was named tournament MVP.

Filipowski has volunteered locally as an elementary school math tutor and as a youth basketball coach. "Kyle Filipowski is special because of his outstanding playmaking ability at his size," said Paul Biancardi, ESPN National Recruiting Director. "He demonstrates extreme versatility as he handles, passes and shows touch around the rim with a developing outside shot. It's hard to find this type of skill set and decision-making with a center's height."

Filipowski has maintained an A average in the classroom. He will begin his senior year of high school this fall.

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.

Filipowski joins recent Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Basketball Players of the Year Dallion Johnson (2019-20, Phillips Academy), Chris Ledlum (2018-19, Northfield Mount Hermon School), A.J. Reeves (2017-18, Brimmer & May School), and Azar Swain (2016-17, The Rivers School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Filipowski has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Filipowski 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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