

**CAMDEN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEW JERSEY 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 D.J. Wagner of Camden High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade New Jersey Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Wagner is the second Gatorade New Jersey Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Camden 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 Wagner as New Jersey's 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, Wagner 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-3, 165-pound sophomore guard led the Panthers to a 13-0 record this past season, averaging 22.0 points, 3.8 assists, 3.8 rebounds and 2.0 steals per game. Wagner was named the NJ.com Player of the Year and was selected National Sophomore of the Year by MaxPreps. He is a two-time First Team All-State honoree and is ranked as the nation's No. 1 prospect in the Class of 2023 by ESPN.

Wagner has volunteered locally on behalf of toy and clothing-donation drives. "D.J. Wagner is one of the most dynamic and exciting players in the Class of 2023," said Paul Biancardi, ESPN National Recruiting Director. "A gym rat who loves to work on his craft, he thrives in transition or can organize his team in the halfcourt set with leadership. Where he's a difference-maker is in his 'float' game and lay-up efficiency."

Wagner has maintained a 3.75 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his junior 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.

Wagner joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Boys Basketball Players of the Year Cliff Omoruyi (2019-20, Roselle Catholic High School), Jabri Abdur-Rahim (2018-19, Blair Academy), and Jahvon Quinerly (2017-18 & 2016-17, Hudson Catholic Regional High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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