

**CHESTERTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE INDIANA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 11, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Zack Bowser of Chesterton High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Indiana Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Bowser is the second Gatorade Indiana Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Chesterton 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 Bowser as Indiana's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Bowser 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 6-foot, 150-pound senior forward led the Trojans to a 21-2 record and the Class 3A state championship this past season. Bowser amassed 40 goals and passed 11 assists, netting a hat trick in Chesterton's 7-1 win over Castle High in the state title game. The 2020 Indiana Soccer Coaches Association Player of the Year, Bowser was also a United Soccer Coaches High School All-American selection. He concluded his prep soccer career with 88 goals and 34 assists.

A member of the Health Occupations Students of America organization, Bowser earned his Certified Nurses Assistant certificate this spring. He has volunteered locally as a peer tutor and youth soccer referee, and he has donated his time to multiple community service initiatives through his church. "Zack has a few pieces to his game that most players at this level just don't possess," said Mike Enghofer, head coach of Valparaiso High. "He runs at defenders relentlessly and has a confidence to his one-on-one game that allows him to beat guys at a terrifying rate. Once he gets by defenders, he's clinical in front of goal and has the IQ to do the little things to gain an advantage."

Bowser has maintained a weighted 4.44 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Mount Vernon Nazarene University in Ohio 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.

Bowser joins recent Gatorade Indiana Boys Soccer Players of the Year Chris Freeman (2019-20, Zionsville Community High School), Jack Eaton (2018-19, Chesterton High School), and Andrew Cross (2017-18 & 2016-17, Reitz Memorial High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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

###