

**SHAKOPEE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MINNESOTA 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 Zach Susee of Shakopee High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Minnesota Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Susee is the first Gatorade Minnesota Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Shakopee 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 Susee as Minnesota'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, Susee 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-8, 150-pound senior forward scored 23 goals and passed for 11 assists this past season, leading the Sabers (8-2-3) to the sectional semifinals. Class 2A's Mr. Soccer, Susee is a two-time First Team All-State selection and was named an All-American by the United Soccer Coaches. He was also the only Minnesota player chosen for the High School All-American Game.

Susee has volunteered locally on behalf of Feed My Starving Children and youth soccer programs. "Zach Susee's ability to create both for himself and for his teammates is at a level I've never seen in 14 years coaching at the high school level," said Brian Nacey, head coach at Burnsville High School. "He changes pace better than anyone I've ever seen and he's incredibly skilled and composed in tight spaces."

Susee has maintained a 4.08 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.

Susee joins recent Gatorade Minnesota Boys Soccer Players of the Year Jameson Charles (2019-20, Washburn High School), Herbert Endeley (2018-19, Totino-Grace High School), Patrick Weah (2017-18, Wayzata High School), and Juan Louis (2016-17, Washburn High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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