

**SKYRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE UTAH 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 Austin Wallace of Skyridge High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Utah Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Wallace is the first Gatorade Utah Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Skyridge 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 Wallace as Utah'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, Wallace 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-9, 140-pound senior forward scored 21 goals and passed for 10 assists this past season, leading the Falcons (16-5) to the Class 6A state final. Skyridge's all-time leading scorer, Wallace was a Second Team All-State selection as a sophomore. He concluded his prep career with 44 goals and 26 assists.

A devoted member of his church youth group, Wallace has volunteered locally on behalf of retirement homes, the Feeding America hunger relief network and a homeless shelter. "Austin Wallace was an absolute beast to play against," said Isaac Klingonsmith, head coach at Crimson Cliffs High. "He's very quick with excellent dribbling and passing ability, and he can finish. He's always dangerous on the ball and has smart movement off the ball."

Wallace has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Dixie State University after serving a two-year mission with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

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.

Wallace joins recent Gatorade Utah Boys Soccer Players of the Year Eli Nixon (2019-20, Layton High School), Jack Terrill (2018-19, Judge Memorial Catholic High School), Carter Johnson (2017-18, Herriman High School), and Carlos Becerra (2016-17, Copper Hills High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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