

**HAMILTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE ARIZONA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (December 7, 2021) — In its 37<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Nicco Marchiol of Hamilton High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Arizona Football Player of the Year**. Marchiol is the first Gatorade Arizona Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Hamilton 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 Marchiol as Arizona's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in December, Marchiol joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners, including Emmitt Smith (1986-87, Escambia High School, Fla.), Matthew Stafford (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas) and Christian McCaffrey (2012-13 & 2013-14, Valor Christian High School, Colo.).

At the time of his selection, the 6-foot-2, 217-pound senior quarterback had led the Huskies to an 11-0 record and a berth in the Open State Championship bracket semifinals against Saguaro High. Marchiol passed for 2,429 yards and 35 touchdowns with only two interceptions while also rushing for 286 yards and six scores in 11 games. A transfer from Regis Jesuit High in Colorado after his sophomore year, Marchiol was a Second Team All-State selection for Regis as a sophomore. He is ranked as the nation's No. 217 recruit in the Class of 2022 by ESPN.com.

A three-time state champion as a wrestler, Marchiol has volunteered locally with Feed My Starving Children, and he has donated his time as a youth football coach and mentor. "Nicco is the real deal this year," said Eddy Zubey, head coach of Higley High School. "He has improved a lot from last year. He's in full control of his team and it shows. He uses his arm as well as his legs to get things done."

Marchiol has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at the University of West Virginia next 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Marchiol joins recent Gatorade Arizona Football Players of the Year Ty Thompson (2020-21, Mesquite High School), Bijan Robinson (2019-20, Salpointe Catholic High School), Jake Smith (2018-19, Notre Dame Preparatory High School), and Brock Purdy (2017-18, Perry High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, Marchiol has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. Marchiol is also eligible to submit a short 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 \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY), Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade) and Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).