

**CAPITAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MONTANA BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 16, 2022) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Brayden Koch** of **Capital High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Montana Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Koch is the first Gatorade Montana Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Capital 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 court, distinguishes Koch as Montana'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 March, Koch 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, 160-pound senior guard had led the Bruins to an 18-2 record and the Class AA state quarterfinals at the time of his selection. Koch averaged 21.7 points, 3.4 rebounds, 2.6 steals and 2.5 assists through 20 games. He is a First Team All-Conference and First Team All-State selection.

Koch has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics and youth basketball programs. "Brayden Koch is a game-changer," said Brandon Day, head coach at Helena High School. "He's unselfish and very talented, and he consistently makes the right decisions. If you try to trap him, deny him the ball, whatever, he will make you pay."

Koch has maintained a 3.49 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at Carroll College 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Koch joins recent Gatorade Montana Boys Basketball Players of the Year Drew Wyman (2020-21, Great Falls High School), Rollie Worster (2019-20 & 2018-19, Hellgate High School) and Sam Beighle (2017-18, Sentinel 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 court. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, Koch 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. Koch 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 or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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