

**BREWSTER ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEW HAMPSHIRE 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 **Matas Buzelis** of **Brewster Academy** is the **2021-22 Gatorade New Hampshire Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Buzelis is the fourth Gatorade New Hampshire Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Brewster Academy.

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 Buzelis as New Hampshire'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, Buzelis 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-8, 190-pound junior guard led the Bobcats to a 31-8 record and the New England Prep School Athletic Council Class AAA Tournament championship this past season. Buzelis averaged 11.4 points, 5.9 rebounds, 2.1 assists, 1.3 blocks and 1.2 steals per game and clicked for 18 points in Brewster's 79-61 win over Northfield Mount Hermon School in the Class AAA title, earning MVP honors in the process. The son of a former member of the Lithuanian National Team, Buzelis will play for the World Team at the Nike Hoop Summit in April. A transfer from Hinsdale Central (Ill.) High, he is ranked as the nation's No. 10 recruit in the Class of 2023 by ESPN.com.

Buzelis has volunteered as an ambassador for the Rimantas Kaukenas Charitable Foundation, a non-profit organization that provides charitable assistance to Lithuanian children with cancer. "Matas Buzelis has a dynamic skill set, but he also has the size of a power forward," said Paul Biancardi of ESPN Basketball. "He has range as a shooter, a high basketball IQ and is a quality passer."

Buzelis has maintained a B average in the classroom. He will begin his senior year of high school 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.

Buzelis joins recent Gatorade New Hampshire Boys Basketball Players of the Year Alex Karaban (2020-21, New Hampton School), Jordan Geronimo (2019-20, St. Paul's School), Arie Breakfield (2018-19, Spaulding High School) and Max Bonney-Liles (2017-18, Alvirne 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, Buzelis 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. Buzelis 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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