

**CAMDEN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE NEW JERSEY BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (March 16, 2022) — In its 37<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **D.J. Wagner** of **Camden High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade New Jersey Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Wagner is the second Gatorade New Jersey Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Camden 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 Wagner as New Jersey'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, Wagner 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 state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 6-foot-3, 165-pound junior guard had led the Panthers to a 29-2 record, a No. 5 national ranking by MaxPreps and a berth in the Group 2 state finals at the time of his selection. The state's returning Gatorade Boys Basketball Player of the Year, Wagner averaged 19.6 points, 4.3 rebounds, 3.3 assists and 3.1 steals through 31 games. The NJ.com Player of the Year, he was MaxPreps National Sophomore of the Year and is ranked as the nation's No. 1 prospect in the Class of 2023 by ESPN.

Wagner has volunteered locally on behalf of toy and clothing donation drives. "Wagner is exciting in the open court and loves to attack and put pressure on the defense in transition," said Paul Biancardi of ESPN Basketball. "He penetrates to the basket at will with a clever handle, and he combines a sharp pull-up jumper with a much improved three-point shot."

Wagner has maintained a 3.74 GPA 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.

Two-time winner Wagner joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Boys Basketball Players of the Year Cliff Omoruyi (2019-20, Roselle Catholic High School), Jabri Abdur-Rahim (2018-19, Blair Academy), and Jahvon Quinerly (2017-18, Hudson Catholic Regional 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, Wagner 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. Wagner 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).