

**SALESIANUM SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE DELAWARE BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 16, 2022) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Jake Ross** of **Salesianum School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Delaware Boys Soccer Player of the Year**. Ross is the thirteenth Gatorade Delaware Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Salesianum 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 Ross as Delaware'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, Ross 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 6-foot-3, 175-pound junior forward led the Sallies to a 14-4 record and the Division I state championship this past season. Ross tallied 22 goals and six assists, including both scores in Salesianum's 2-0 win over Caesar Rodney High in the state final. The Delaware High School Soccer Coaches Association Player of the Year, Ross is also a United Soccer Coaches High School All-American selection. He concluded his junior year with 35 goals and 14 assists in his prep soccer career.

Ross has volunteered locally with Best Buddies and as a youth soccer coach. "Jake has really good pace and is tenacious in the penalty area," said Bob Bussiere, head coach of Archmere Academy. "His movement off of the ball and willingness to sacrifice (attacking) runs for his teammates is impressive because he draws a lot of attention and can really unbalance a defense."

Ross has maintained a 3.40 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.

Ross joins recent Gatorade Delaware Boys Soccer Players of the Year Aidan McDade (2020-21, Appoquinimink High School), Drew Blackwell (2019-20, Salesianum School), Tommy McGrail (2018-19, Salesianum School), and Bryce Wallace (2017-18, Salesianum 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, Ross 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. Ross 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.