

**OLATHE WEST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE KANSAS 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 **Elyes Ellouz** of **Olathe West High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Kansas Boys Soccer Player of the Year**. Ellouz is the second Gatorade Kansas Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Olathe West 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 Ellouz as Kansas' 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, Ellouz 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 5-foot-8, 135-pound senior midfielder and forward led the Owls to a 13-7-1 record and the Class 6A state championship this past season. Ellouz tallied 26 goals and two assists, and scored the lone goal in overtime in the state title game. Ellouz also had the game-winning goal in the state quarterfinals and state semifinals for Olathe West, which was beset by injuries and lost seven of eight games to close the regular season. The Class 6A Midfielder of the Year, he concluded his prep soccer career with 42 goals and 18 assists.

A member of the Olathe West Theatre Department, Ellouz has volunteered locally with Diversity for Change in Kansas City, a fundraising project that promotes the message of accepting people from every culture while also embracing your own background. He has also donated his time as a youth soccer coach and mentor. "Elyes was the mainstay—he held the ship together and kept us going," said Matt Trumpp, head coach of Olathe West High School. "He was able to move us forward as a team as we missed multiple starters. And in the playoffs, he was simply phenomenal."

Ellouz has maintained a weighted 3.92 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at MidAmerica Nazarene University 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.

Ellouz joins recent Gatorade Kansas Boys Soccer Players of the Year Alan Lopez (2020-21, Dodge City High School), Jony Munoz (2019-20, Olathe West High School), Aidan Bates (2018-19, Blue Valley Southwest High School), and Noah Mabry (2017-18, Blue Valley West 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, Ellouz 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. Ellouz 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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