

**LA SALLE ACADEMY STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE RHODE ISLAND 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 **Michael Hofstetter** of **La Salle Academy** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Rhode Island Boys Soccer Player of the Year**. Hofstetter is the eighth Gatorade Rhode Island Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from La Salle 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 field, distinguishes Hofstetter as Rhode Island'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, Hofstetter 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-9, 155-pound senior midfielder led the Rams to a 17-0-1 record and the Division I state championship this past season. Hofstetter tallied 17 goals and 16 assists and scored the lone goal in La Salle's 1-0 win over North Kingstown High in the state title game. The Division I Player of the Year and the state tournament most valuable player, he is also a United Soccer Coaches High School All-American selection.

Hofstetter has volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach. "Mikey was exceptional this season—he always came in ready to leave his mark on every match with his speed, technical ability and capitalizing on goal-scoring opportunities," said Oscar Zorrilla, head coach of Wheeler High School. "He loved the crucial, crunch-time moments because that's when he would step up his game and make big plays for the Rams."

Hofstetter has maintained a weighted A average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Rhode Island 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.

Hofstetter joins recent Gatorade Rhode Island Boys Soccer Players of the Year Nathan Lagoa (2020-21, La Salle Academy), Roy Barrios (2019-20, Tolman High School), Luis Blanco (2018-19, Tolman High School), and Jon Sherman (2017-18, South Kingstown 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, Hofstetter 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. Hofstetter 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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