

**COLUMBIA RIVER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE WASHINGTON BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 16, 2022) — In its 37<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Alex Harris** of **Columbia River High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Washington Boys Soccer Player of the Year**. Harris is the first Gatorade Washington Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Columbia River 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 Harris as Washington'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, Harris 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-10, 140-pound junior forward scored 51 goals and passed for 12 assists this past season, leading the Rapids (23-1) to the Class 2A state semifinals. The Greater St. Helen's League Player of the Year, Harris recorded 10 hat tricks on the season. He scored eight of River's 12 goals in the state tournament.

Harris has volunteered locally with the Salvation Army and at a pharmacy distribution center. He has also donated his time as a youth soccer coach. "Alex was phenomenal this season," said Tony Ayala, head coach of Hockinson High School. "What makes Alex so dangerous and effective is his play off the ball and his soccer IQ. He constantly puts himself in dangerous positions and he is deadly when he gets his foot on the ball. His ability to one-touch the ball off the run with precise accuracy is remarkable."

A member of his school's International Baccalaureate program, Harris has maintained a weighted 4.30 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.

Harris joins recent Gatorade Washington Boys Soccer Players of the Year Thomas Vlasak (2020-21, Lewis & Clark High School), Logan Oyama (2019-20 & 2018-19, Puyallup High School), and Michael Rojas (2017-18, Royal 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, Harris 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. Harris 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).

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