

**BROOKFIELD CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WISCONSIN GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June, 23, 2022) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Kayla Budish of Brookfield Central High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Wisconsin Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Budish is the fourth Gatorade Wisconsin Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Brookfield Central 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 Budish as Wisconsin's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Budish 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-7 senior forward scored 34 goals and passed for 15 assists this past season, leading the Lancers (13-4-1) to the sectional finals. A United Soccer Coaches All-American, Budish is a First Team All-State Honoree and a two-time Greater Metro Conference Player of the Year. She concluded her prep career with 88 goals and 34 assists.

A board member for her school's Blue Crew athletic leadership group, Budish has volunteered locally on behalf of youth sports programs. "Kayla Budish is such a game-changer and difference-maker," said Scott Stein, head coach at Menomonee Falls High School. "You have to account for her every second. She doesn't need a lot of touches to score goals, she shares the ball well and she's a great one-on-one finisher."

Budish has maintained a weighted 4.30 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Purdue 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.

Budish joins recent Gatorade Wisconsin Girls Soccer Players of the Year Maggie Starker (2020-21, Whitefish Bay High School), Lauren Brown (2019-20, Catholic Memorial High School), Emma Nagel (2018-19, Bay Port High School), and Brandi Thomsen (2017-18, Brookfield Central 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, Budish 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. Budish 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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