

**THUNDER BASIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WYOMING 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 **Cena Carlson** of **Thunder Basin High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Wyoming Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Carlson is the second Gatorade Wyoming Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Thunder Basin 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 Carlson as Wyoming'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, Carlson 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 sophomore forward scored 24 goals and passed for 10 assists this past season, leading the Bolts (18-0) to the Class 4A state championship. Carlson is a two-time All-Conference selection. She's also a two-time First Team All-State honoree.

A devoted member of her church youth group, Carlson has volunteered locally on behalf of a vacation bible school as well as Blessings in a Backpack, which mobilizes communities, individuals and resources to provide food on the weekends for school-aged children who might otherwise go hungry. "Cena Carlson is a game-changer, for sure," said Stephanie Stuber, head coach at Campbell County High School. "She has the mindset to find the back of the net and is electrifying with the ball at her feet. She always makes things happen on the field."

Cena has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her junior 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.

Carlson joins recent Gatorade Wyoming Girls Soccer Players of the Year Emily Taucher (2020-21, Rock Springs High School), Alyssa Bedard (2019-20, Rock Springs High School), Grace Roswadowski (2018-19, Thunder Basin High School), and Lexi Pulley (2017-18, Laramie 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, Carlson 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. Carlson 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.