

**LIBERTY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ARIZONA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 6, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Navi Bruzon** of **Liberty High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Arizona Football Player of the Year**. Bruzon is the first Gatorade Arizona Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Liberty 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 Bruzon as Arizona's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in January, Bruzon joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Trevor Lawrence (2018-19 & 2016-17, Cartersville High School, Ga.), Matthew Stafford (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas) and Emmitt Smith (1986-87, Escambia High School, Fla.).

The 5-foot-10, 180-pound junior quarterback passed for 3,041 yards and 33 touchdowns this past season, leading the Lions (11-1) to the Open Division state tournament semifinals. The Conference 6A Desert Valley Region Player of the Year, Bruzon added 409 rushing yards and five scores on the ground. Also the 2022 Arizona Cardinals State Player of the Year, he was invited to compete in the 2022 U.S. Army Bowl National High School Combine.

Bruzon has volunteered locally at youth centers organizing toys for children around the holiday season in addition to donating his time with Liberty High School's chapter of the Unified Sports program, which empowers individuals with and without intellectual disabilities to engage through the power of sports. "Navi is a one-of-a-kind leader and player," said Colin Thomas, head coach of Liberty High School. "He is the heart and soul of our offense and a leader on and off the field."

Bruzon has maintained a 4.0 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.

Bruzon joins recent Gatorade Arizona Football Players of the Year Nicco Marchiol (2021-22, Hamilton High School), Ty Thompson (2020-21, Mesquite High School), Bijan Robinson (2019-20, Salpointe Catholic High School), and Jake Smith (2018-19, Notre Dame Preparatory High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Being a Gatorade Player of the Year means paying it forward for the next generation. Through Gatorade's Play it Forward initiative, every Player of the Year receives a grant to give to one of Gatorade's social impact partners, supporting Gatorade's ambition to fuel the future of sport. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

For nearly 40 years, Gatorade has honored high school athletes at the top of their game as teammates, supporting their communities and achieving academic success. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes and community leaders, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport.

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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