

**ST. SEBASTIAN'S SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MASSACHUSETTS BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 15, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **AJ Dybantsa** of **St. Sebastian's School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Dybantsa is the first Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Sebastian's 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 court, distinguishes Dybantsa as Massachusetts' best high school boys basketball player. Dybantsa joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Chet Holmgren (2020-21, Minnehaha Academy, Minn.), Trae Young (2016-17, Norman North High School, Ok.), Jayson Tatum (2015-16, Chaminade College Preparatory School, Mo.), and Karl-Anthony Towns (2013-14 & 2012-13, St. Joseph High School, N.J.).

The 6-foot-8, 196-pound freshman forward led the Arrows to a 26-2 record and the New England Preparatory School Athletic Council Class A title game this past season. Dybantsa averaged 19.1 points, 9.6 rebounds, 2.9 assists and 2.5 blocks per game and shot 60.8 percent from the field, including 41 percent on 3-point attempts. He was an Independent School League First Team All-Conference selection and is rated among the nation's top prospects in the Class of 2026.

Dybantsa has volunteered locally on behalf of the Argosy Charter Thompson Middle School and is a member of St. Sebastian's 'Men With Positive Attitudes' club, which focuses on developing a more inclusive community within the school. "It's hard not to love his wiry and quick-twitch frame with his length and dynamism," said Paul Biancardi, National Recruiting Director for ESPN. "At a very young age, he is already a multi-position defender with plus quickness. When it comes to scoring, his transition ability is advanced and so is his drive game. His jumper has shown early promise and his handle has the fluidity for him to evade and get past defenders. He's got a quick release on his jumper and rebounds with explosive vertical ability and length. He also elevates well in tight spaces for tip-in put backs. I see him as the favorite to become the No. 1 prospect in the class of 2026."

Dybantsa has maintained a B average in the classroom. He will begin his sophomore 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.

Dybantsa joins recent Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Basketball Players of the Year TJ Power (2021-22, Worcester Academy), Kyle Filipowski (2020-21, Wilbraham & Monson Academy), Dallion Johnson (2019-20, Phillips Academy), and Chris Ledlum (2018-19, Northfield Mount Hermon 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.