

**CONWAY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE ARKANSAS BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 16, 2023) — In its 38<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Will Childers** of **Conway High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Arkansas Boys Soccer Player of the Year**. Childers is the seventh Gatorade Arkansas Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Conway 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 Childers as Arkansas' 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, Childers joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Ben Bender (2019-20, Calvert Hall College High School, Md.), Jacob Shaffelburg (2017-18, Berkshire School, Mass.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire School, Mass.) and Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel High School, Calif.).

The 5-foot-9, 140-pound senior forward led the Wampus Cats (20-3) to a second straight 6A state championship this past season. Childers was named MVP of the title game after scoring a hat trick in a 3-2 victory. He finished the season with 35 goals and 14 assists and was named the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette All-Arkansas Player of the Year.

An active member of the Future Business Leaders of America, Childers has volunteered locally with Caring Cats, a Conway High School community service group dedicated to performing planned and random acts of kindness in the school and Conway community. He also has donated his time to Ducks Unlimited, a national nonprofit that specializes in wetlands and waterfowl conservation. "Will is an outstanding forward with a knack for scoring," said Cabot High School head coach Michael Reitz. "His speed along with his ability to time his runs was really troublesome for us. Speed, intellect and just a relentless mentality to score made that kid great."

Childers has maintained a 3.74 weighted GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Ouachita Baptist 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.

Childers joins recent Gatorade Arkansas Boys Soccer Players of the Year Fernando Castro (2021-22, Russellville High School), Jacob Chalk (2020-21, Conway High School), Dylan Rice (2019-20, Russellville High School), and Jose Vega (2018-19, Springdale 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](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).