

**VERONA AREA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WISCONSIN BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 16, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Connor Gage** of **Verona Area High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Wisconsin Boys Soccer Player of the Year**. Gage is the second Gatorade Wisconsin Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Verona Area 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 Gage as Wisconsin’s 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, Gage 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 6-foot, 175-pound junior forward and midfielder led the Wildcats to a 21-3 record and the Division 1 state championship this past season. Gage scored 33 goals, including the game-winner in the state title game, and added 25 assists. He was also the Wisconsin Soccer Coaches Association State Player of the Year.

Gage has volunteered locally by working with special needs students after school and accompanying them on organized trips. He also has donated his time coordinating and running youth basketball and soccer camps. “Connor has been the most dominant player on the most dominant team,” said Sun Prairie West High School head coach Mike McIntosh. “Connor also combines a key tactical aspect—his vision and off-ball movement are tremendous—with his physical and technical gifts.”

Gage has maintained an A average in the classroom. He has made a verbal commitment to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Wisconsin beginning in the fall of 2024.

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.

Gage joins recent Gatorade Wisconsin Boys Soccer Players of the Year Denis Krioutchenkov (2021-22, Shorewood High School), Will Navarre (2020-21, Nicolet High School), Eliot Popkewitz (2019-20, Verona Area High School), and Carter Abbott (2018-19, Marquette University 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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