

**KOKOMO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE INDIANA BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 21, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Flory Bidunga** of **Kokomo High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Indiana Boys Basketball Player of the Year**. Bidunga is the first Gatorade Indiana Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Kokomo High School.

The award, which celebrates the nation’s top high school athletes for excellence on the court, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes Bidunga as Indiana’s best high school boys basketball player. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport, touting an all-star group of alumni that includes LeBron James (2002-03 & 2001-02, St. Vincent – St. Mary High School, Ohio), Karl-Anthony Towns (2013-14 & 2012-13, St. Joseph High School, N.J.) and Jayson Tatum (2015-16, 2014-15 & 2013-14, Chaminade College Preparatory School, Mo.).

The state’s returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 6-foot-10, 225-pound senior center averaged 19.0 points and 12.9 rebounds per game this past season, leading the Wildkats (25-4) to the Class 4A regional title game. Bidunga also averaged 4.4 blocks and 3.2 assists while connecting on a remarkable 81.4 percent of his field-goal attempts (236-of-290). Ranked as the nation’s No. 6 recruit in the Class of 2024 by ESPN, he concluded his prep basketball career with 1,609 points and 1,132 rebounds.

Bidunga has volunteered locally as part of multiple fundraising campaigns on behalf of the Haitian Environmental Support Program. He has also donated his time as a youth basketball coach. “As a high school player, Flory changes the way you have to play as much as any player we have ever faced,” said Mark Rinehart, head coach of William Henry Harrison High School. “He completely takes attacking the basket away from your team. At the other end of the floor, you simply cannot allow him to move freely to the rim because if he can get any space, he will just play over your head.”

Bidunga has maintained a 3.48 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at Kansas 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.

Two-time winner Bidunga joins recent Gatorade Indiana Boys Basketball Players of the Year Fletcher Loyer (2021-22, Homestead High School), Caleb Furst (2020-21, Blackhawk Christian School) and Trey Kaufman (2019-20, Silver Creek High School), among the state’s list of former award winners.

As part of Gatorade’s commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners’ grants have totaled more than \$4.9 million across more than 1,600 organizations.

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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