

**HOMEWOOD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE ALABAMA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 14, 2024) — In its 39<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Will Jackson of Homewood High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Alabama Boys Soccer Player of the Year**. Jackson is the first Gatorade Alabama Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Homewood High School.

The award, which celebrates the nation’s top high school athletes for excellence on the field, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes Jackson as Alabama’s best high school boys soccer 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 Lyle Yorks (1987-88, E.O. Smith High School, Conn.), Alecko Eskandarian (1999-00, Bergen Catholic High School, N.J.) and Ben Bender (2019-20, Calvert Hall College High School, Md.).

The 5-foot-10, 160-pound senior midfielder and forward led the Patriots to a 23-2-3 record and the Class 6A state championship this past season. Jackson scored 26 goals and passed for 21 assists, netting a pair of goals in Homewood’s 3-1 win over Spanish Fort High School in the state final to earn tournament MVP honors. A 2023 Class 6A First Team All-State selection, he concluded his prep soccer career with 63 goals and 37 assists.

A long-time pianist and an accomplished creative writer, Jackson has volunteered locally as a youth mentor. He has also donated his time to multiple community service initiatives through his church. “When Will got the ball he was creative and gave us problems,” said Mike Bautista, head coach of Briarwood Christian High School. “He was smart in where he attacked, roaming to find a better angle to be more dangerous. Will has been pivotal for Homewood for years and is vital to their success.”

Jackson has maintained a weighted 4.02 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at Wake Forest 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.

Jackson joins recent Gatorade Alabama Boys Soccer Players of the Year Cristian Barrientos (2022-23, Fort Payne High School), Jack Heaps (2021-22, Mountain Brook High School), Jackson Nabors (2020-21, Indian Springs School) and Tony Shaw (2019-20, Vestavia Hills 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, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$4.9 million in grants to winners across more than 1,900 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](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 X(Twitter) at [x.com/Gatorade](https://x.com/Gatorade).