

**ROCKHURST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MISSOURI 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 **Baka Kante** of **Rockhurst High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Missouri Boys Soccer Player of the Year**. Kante is the fifth Gatorade Missouri Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Rockhurst 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 Kante as Missouri’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-11, 150-pound senior midfielder led the Hawkleys to a 24-0 record and a third-straight Class 4 state championship this past season. Kante scored 18 goals and passed for 21 assists as Rockhurst finished the fall season ranked No. 1 in the country by the United Soccer Coaches organization. The two-time Class 4 Player of the Year and a two-time USC High School All-American selection, he concluded his prep soccer career with 37 goals and 44 assists.

A member of his school’s Regis Club, an in-house community service club, Kante traveled to Morocco last summer as part of a Global Foundation for Peace outreach program centered around soccer. He has also volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach. “Baka was the engine for a team that was crowned (the mythical) national champions (by the United Soccer Coaches organization),” said Chris Farmer, head coach of Park Hill South High School. “They had many talented players, but Baka was the one player who helped it all mesh together. Without him, they would have still been good, but nearly as good as they were.”

Kante has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Virginia 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.

Kante joins recent Gatorade Missouri Boys Soccer Players of the Year Oliver Doyle (2022-23, Webster Groves High School), Ryder Barrett (2021-22, Rockhurst High School), Jake Karolczak (2020-21, St. Dominic High School) and Christian Kraus (2019-20, Rockwood Summit 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).