

**LAKERIDGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE OREGON BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 14, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Rafa Loyo of Lakeridge High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Oregon Boys Soccer Player of the Year**. Loyo is the fourth Gatorade Oregon Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Lakeridge 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 Loyo as Oregon’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 6-foot-2, 175-pound senior midfielder led the Pacers to an 18-1 record and the Class 6A state championship this past season. Loyo scored 10 goals, including two in Lakeridge’s 3-2, overtime win over Jesuit High in the state title game. The Class 6A Player of the Year, he was also the Oregonian State Player of the Year and a United Soccer Coaches High School All-American selection.

Loyo has volunteered locally at Every Body Athletics, an exercise program designed for people with disabilities. He also donated his time during the 2020 Oregon wildfires by collecting supplies to donate to communities in need. “Rafa was a straight-up (game) buster,” said Tom Lathrop, head coach of Mountainside High School. “His physical presence paired very effectively with his technical ability. He was a positive control factor in a hotly contested midfield.”

Loyo has maintained a B average in the classroom. He will attend Tecnologico de Monterrey in Mexico, where he will play soccer on scholarship, beginning 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.

Loyo joins recent Gatorade Oregon Boys Soccer Players of the Year Drew Pedersen (2022-23, Jesuit High School), Nani Deperro (2021-22, Summit High School), Aidan Azavedo (2020-21, Jesuit High School) and Scott Gustafson (2019-20, Ashland 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 or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.