

## **WASATCH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE UTAH 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 **Canon Downey** of **Wasatch High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Utah Boys Soccer Player of the Year**. Downey is the first Gatorade Utah Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Wasatch 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 Downey as Utah’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-1, 185-pound senior defender led the Wasps to an 18-0 record and a second-straight Class 5A state championship this past season. Downey scored five goals and passed for two assists while also anchoring a defense that conceded just seven goals and recorded 12 shutouts. The 2023 Deseret News Class 5A Player of the Year, he was also the 2024 Class 5A, Region 7 Defensive Player of the Year.

Downey has volunteered locally as part of multiple community service initiatives through his church and has donated his time as a youth soccer coach. “Canon is one of my biggest leaders on the team—he keeps everyone organized,” said Lance Cosper, head coach of Wasatch High School. “We do not get scored on because of his defense and leadership. He has a drive like no one I’ve ever met. He definitely makes my job as the coach easier.”

Downey has maintained a 3.56 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at the University of the Incarnate Word in Texas 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.

Downey joins recent Gatorade Utah Boys Soccer Players of the Year Hauroa Morgant (2022-23, Juan Diego Catholic High School), Trevor Walk (2021-22, Herriman High School), Austin Wallace (2020-21, Skyridge High School) and Eli Nixon (2019-20, Layton 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).

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