

## **THE PENNINGTON SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NEW JERSEY GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 20, 2024) — In its 39<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Morgan Kotch** of **The Pennington School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade New Jersey Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Kotch is the second Gatorade New Jersey Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from The Pennington 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 Kotch as New Jersey's best high school girls 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 Aly Wagner (1997-98, Presentation High School, Calif.), Mallory Swanson (2014-15, Mountain Vista High School, Colo.) and Kennedy Fuller (2022-23 & 2021-22, Southlake Carroll High School, Texas).

The 5-foot-7 senior forward led the Red Raiders to a 21-0 record and the Prep A state championship this past season. Kotch scored 37 goals and passed for seven assists, including one of each in Pennington's 2-1 win over Rutgers Prep's in the state final. She participated in the High School All-American Game in South Carolina last fall and concluded her prep soccer career with 108 goals and 21 assists.

A member of her school's community service club, Kotch has also served in Pennington student government and has volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach. "I viewed Morgan as unguardable in the final third of the field," said Matt Roach, head coach of the Peddie School. "She has size, remarkable strength and almost absurdly quick feet and skill for her size. She's the most cold-blooded and calm finisher I've seen."

Kotch has maintained a 3.81 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play soccer on scholarship at Villanova 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.

Kotch joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Girls Soccer Players of the Year Melina Rebimbas (2022-23 & 2021-22, Rutgers Preparatory School) and Emily Mason (2020-21 & 2019-20, Hunterdon Central Regional 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).