

## CENTENNIAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NEW MEXICO BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

**CHICAGO** (June 12, 2025) — In its 40<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Evan Kraenzel of Centennial High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade New Mexico Boys Soccer Player of the Year**.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation's best high school athletes for their success on the field, in the classroom and in the community. The award distinguishes Kraenzel as New Mexico's best high school boys soccer player, and he joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as Ben Bender (2019-20, Calvert Hall College High School, M.D.) and Ransford Gyan (2022-23 & 2023-24, St. Benedict's Preparatory School, N.J.).

The 5-foot-8, 135-pound senior forward led the Hawks to a 22-1 record and the program's first Class 5A state championship this past season. Kraenzel scored 23 goals and passed for 11 assists, recording a point in all but one game. A three-time All-State selection, he was the state's only boys United Soccer Coaches All-American selection in 2024.

Kraenzel has volunteered locally at the El Caldito Soup Kitchen, an organization that prepares and serves meals to people in need. He has also donated his time mentoring and reading to local elementary school students. "Evan is a playmaker," said Tom Hirschman, head coach of Eldorado High School. "He excels at creating goal-scoring opportunities for his teammates. He has tremendous vision and passing abilities. He has all that talent, and is unselfish, which makes it frustratingly difficult to defend him."

Kraenzel has maintained a 3.82 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play soccer at University of the Incarnate Word (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 across 12 different high school sports – 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.

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 \$5.6 million in grants to winners across more than 2,000 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](https://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X(Twitter) at [x.com/Gatorade](https://x.com/Gatorade).

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