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## **ELIZABETHTOWN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE KENTUCKY BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 6, 2018) — In its 33<sup>rd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Jansen Wilson of Elizabethtown High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Kentucky Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Wilson is the first Gatorade Kentucky Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Elizabethtown High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Wilson as Kentucky's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Wilson joins an elite alumni association of past state soccer award-winners, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel HS, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, 2002-03, East Brunswick HS, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-04, Blue Valley West HS, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire HS, Mass.), Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista HS, Colo.).

The 5-foot-10, 142-pound junior midfielder scored 28 goals and passed for 31 assists this past season, leading the Panthers (14-5) to the 17th District Tournament. A First Team All-State selection, Wilson was the 2017 Kentucky Youth Soccer Association Player of the Year and traveled to Holland with the state's U.S. Youth Soccer Olympic Development Program. He concluded his junior year with 65 goals and 61 assists in his prep soccer career.

Wilson has volunteered locally as a youth soccer and basketball coach in addition to donating his time to multiple community service initiatives through his church youth group. "Jansen is very hard to defend, no matter what," said Justin Maddock, head coach of Central Hardin High. "He creates opportunities out of nothing. He can single-handedly win a game for a team."

Wilson has maintained a weighted 3.42 GPA in the classroom. He has made a verbal commitment to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Kentucky beginning in the fall of 2019.

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 work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Wilson joins recent Gatorade Kentucky Boys Soccer Players of the Year Haji Abdikadir (2016-17, Louisville Collegiate School), Aime Mabika (2015-16, Henry Clay High School), Sam Stockton (2014-15 & 2013-14, Trinity High School), Chris Hubbard (2012-13, Trinity High School), Neil Henley (2011-12, St. Xavier High School), Oliver Brown (2010-11, St. Xavier High School), Lepe Seetane (2009-10, Trinity High School), Kevin Bick (2008-09 & 2007-08, St. Xavier High School), and Josh Lipka (2006-07, Lexington Catholic High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Wilson will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit [www.gatorade.com/poy](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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