

Grand Island's Madisyn Pezzino earns Gatorade Player of the Year for NY



Grand Island's Maddie Pezzino, middle, celebrates her record-breaking goal against Lockport in October 2016. (Harry Scull Jr./Buffalo News file photo)

- By [Ben Tsujimoto](#) - Published Tue, Jun 20, 2017

She may be one semester into her college career at Florida State and in the throes of the United Women's Soccer season, but Madisyn Pezzino has now earned national accolades for her record-setting high school career.

The Grand Island High School athlete, who shattered the New York State record for goals, was named [Gatorade Player of the Year for girls soccer in New York](#) on Monday.

"I was shocked," Pezzino said of her reaction to receiving the award. "I knew I was nominated but I never thought I would actually be the one to receive it. It's selected out of many talented athletes and I was blown away by the fact I was chosen, but I am extremely thankful."

Gatorade has tracked the winners since 1998, and Pezzino is the only Section VI athlete to represent the state over those two decades. Previous winners include United States women's national team great Abby Wambach and current USWNT forward Crystal Dunn.

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Many girls soccer teammates and supporters took to Twitter to congratulate Pezzino; one notable message came from North Carolina Courage head coach Paul Riley, the former head man for the Western New York Flash before the National Women's Soccer League franchise was sold.

While her premier development with Empire United, Buffalo Soccer Academy and the Western New York Flash Academy allowed her to develop against elite competition, Pezzino was an unstoppable force in Section VI. She concluded her five years for the Vikings with 251 goals, breaking the previous record, 234, [set in 2015 by City Honors' Molly Petrucci](#).

The Buffalo News covered Pezzino on the night she broke the record, an 8-0 thrashing of Lockport, [here](#).

Despite a slow start to the summer campaign with the Western New York Flash's United Women's Soccer team, Pezzino turned in her best match of the summer in [her side's 4-1 win over the Rochester Lady Lancers](#) on Saturday, notching two goals and two assists. Her rapport with the University at Buffalo's Carissima Cutrona has been a bright spot.

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