

## **HORN LAKE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MISSISSIPPI BOYS FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (December 6, 2018) — In its 34<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Nakobe Dean of Horn Lake High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Mississippi Football Player of the Year**. Dean is the first Gatorade Mississippi Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Horn Lake 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 Dean as Mississippi's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in December, Dean joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Emmitt Smith (1986-87, Escambia High School, Fla.), Matthew Stafford (2005-06 Highland Park High School, Texas) and Christian McCaffrey (2012-13, 2013-14, Valor Christian High School, Colo.).

The 6-foot-1, 220-pound senior linebacker and running back led the Eagles to a 15-0 record and the Class 6A state championship this past season. Dean recorded 175 tackles, including 26 for loss, and seven sacks. He also picked off three passes and forced two fumbles. The Class 6A Mr. Football winner and Under Armour All-America Game selection rushed for nine touchdowns.

A longtime member of his local chapter of the 4-H Club, Dean has volunteered at the Palmer Home for Children, and he donated his time to multiple community service initiatives through the Horn Lake High National Honor Society. "Nakobe Dean is the best high school player I have seen in a very long time," said Ricky Woods, head coach of South Panola High. "He is a complete football player."

Dean has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. He remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Dean joins recent Gatorade Mississippi Football Players of the Year Tony Brown (2017-18, East Central High School), Cam Akers (2016-17, Clinton High School), Jack Abraham (2015-16, Oxford High School), Darrell Henderson (2014-15, South Panola High School), and Devin Voorhies (2013-14, Wilkinson County High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Dean has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of his choosing. He is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit [www.Gatorade.com/POY](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

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