

BISMARCK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NORTH DAKOTA BOYS FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (December 6, 2018) — In its 34th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Will Madler of Bismarck High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade North Dakota Football Player of the Year**. Madler is the sixth Gatorade North Dakota Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Bismarck 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 Madler as North Dakota'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, Madler 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 5-foot-11, 180-pound senior quarterback passed for 2,088 yards and 21 touchdowns this past season, leading the Demons to a 12-0 record and the Class AAA state championship. Madler completed 116 of 171 passes with just two interceptions. The Class AAA Player of the Year, he was also named West Region Player of the Year.

A basketball and baseball standout as well, Madler has volunteered locally on behalf of a soup kitchen and his school's peer support group. "Will Madler just has that 'it' factor," said Chris Clements, head coach at Legacy High School. "He has a great ability to lead the kids around him, and he makes all the plays they need to win. He's the type of kid who wants the ball in his hands, and Bismarck wouldn't have won a championship without him."

Madler 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.

Madler joins recent Gatorade North Dakota Football Players of the Year Andy Gravidahl (2017-18, West Fargo High School), Brandon Metz (2016-17, West Fargo High School), Dalton Feeney (2015-16, Century High School), and James Johannesson (2014-15 & 2013-14, Fargo South High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Madler 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, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

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