

**SOUTHERN COLUMBIA AREA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE
NAMED
GATORADE PENNSYLVANIA 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 **Julian Fleming of Southern Columbia Area High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Pennsylvania Football Player of the Year**. Fleming is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Southern Columbia Area 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 Fleming as Pennsylvania'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, Fleming 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-2, 200-pound junior wide receiver and defensive back had led the Tigers to a 15-0 record and a berth in the Class 2A state championship game at the time of his selection. Fleming caught 72 passes for 1,497 yards and 22 touchdowns through 15 games. He also intercepted four passes, returning three for touchdowns, and punted for an average of 40.7 yards. The Class 2A Player of the Year, Fleming is a two-time All-State selection and is ranked as the nation's No. 3 recruit in the Class of 2020 by ESPN and 247Sports.com.

Also a basketball and track standout, Fleming has volunteered locally on behalf of a soup kitchen and youth sports programs. "Fleming is just a nightmare as a player," said Brandon Carson, head coach at Line Mountain High School. "It doesn't matter if you triple cover him. He makes plays that very, very few receivers can make, let alone make as consistently as he does. He also takes pride in his blocking, he's an excellent defender, excellent punter, excellent return man. He's a pretty unbelievable player."

Fleming has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom. He will begin his senior year of high school next fall.

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.

Fleming joins recent Gatorade Pennsylvania Football Players of the Year Phil Jurkovec (2017-18, Pine-Richland High School), Lamont Wade (2016-17, Clairton High School), Brandon McIlwain (2015-16, Council Rock High School North), Ben DiNucci (2014-15, Pine-Richland High School), and Andrew Ford (2013-14, Cedar Cliff High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Fleming 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.