

BUTTE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MONTANA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (December 6, 2019) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Tommy Mellott of Butte High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Montana Football Player of the Year**. Mellott is the first Gatorade Montana Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Butte 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 Mellott as Montana'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, Mellott joins an elite group of past state football award-winners, 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, 190-pound senior quarterback passed for 2,940 yards and 30 touchdowns this past season, leading the Bulldogs (11-1) to the Class AA state championship game. Mellott completed 191 of 300 passes with just four interceptions, while rushing for 1,217 yards and 16 touchdowns on 162 carries. A three-time All-State selection, he finished his career with 7,542 passing yards and accounted for 102 total touchdowns.

Mellott has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics, food-donation drives for the needy, youth football programs and Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. "I don't think we've seen anyone as dominant in Montana as Tommy Mellott for a very long time," said Grady Bennett, head coach at Glacier High. "He's just at another level, and he can do it all. If you're even close to being successful at taking away one part of his game, he'll crush you with another part."

Mellott has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. He has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at Montana State University 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 and 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.

Mellott joins recent Gatorade Montana Football Players of the Year Carson Rostad (2018-19, Hamilton High School), Gabe Sulser (2017-18, Billings Senior High School), Nathan Dick (2016-17, Billings Senior High School), Balue Chapman (2015-16, Bozeman High School) and Andrew Grinde (2014-15, C.M. Russell High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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