

## Frequently Ask Questions

### **What is the Gatorade Player of the Year program?**

The Gatorade Player of the Year program recognizes the nation's most elite high school athletes for their accomplishments on and off the field. Each year, a selection committee evaluates the nation's top talent to choose one state winner from each the 50 states as well as Washington D.C., in 12 different sports: football, boys and girls basketball, baseball, boys and girls soccer, softball, boys and girls track & field, girls volleyball and boys and girls cross country. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year. From the pool of state winners, one national winner is selected in each of the 12 sports.

What sets the Gatorade Player of the Year award apart is that it recognizes student-athletes not only for outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character. Since its inception in 1985, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has become the most prestigious award in high school sports and honored a distinguished list of athletes including Peyton Manning, Abby Wambach, Karl-Anthony Towns, Derek Jeter and many other sports icons.

### **How are state and national Players of the Year chosen?**

The Gatorade Player of the Year award is presented to student-athletes not only for outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character.

All final selections are determined by The Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee which is an elite group of high school sport evaluators who have extensive experience assessing student-athletes based on their athletic statistics, GPAs and community service. This committee evaluates student-athletes throughout each athletic season by working closely with an extensive network of on-the-ground sources for each sport, including but not limited to sports, coaching and officiating associations and governing bodies, scouting and recruiting services, as well as relevant media.

### **Who can nominate a high school athlete?**

Anyone can nominate a high school athlete for this award.

### **Which 12 sports does the Gatorade Player of the Year award honor? Why these 12?**

The 12 sports that the Gatorade Player of the Year program recognizes are football, volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball and boys and girls track & field. The sports recognized by the Gatorade Player of the Year program have the highest participation rates among American high school student-athletes.

### **Why do you not honor athletes in sports such as swimming, field hockey or lacrosse? Are there plans to add those sports?**

The sports recognized by the Gatorade Player of the Year program have the highest participation rates among American high school student-athletes. Our hope over time is to add new sports to the program to continue honoring the top high school student-athletes across the country.

### **What does a Gatorade Player of the Year win?**



All Gatorade State Players of the Year win a trophy, and their schools receive a banner to display. Gatorade National Players of the Year receive an additional trophy and banner. National winners' schools get a trophy and banner as well.

Additionally, through Gatorade's "Play It Forward" program, all 607 State Gatorade Player of the Year recipients are empowered to award a \$1,000 grant from Gatorade to a community organization that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports.

Gatorade State Players of the Year may also submit an essay explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve Spotlight Grants, which awards \$10,000 to the organization.

### **What is the "Play It Forward" Program?**

Gatorade Play It Forward is a program that works in collaboration with the Gatorade Player of the Year to empower elite high school athletes to give back to a local or national youth sports organizations through grants from Gatorade. The program allows Gatorade to further instill charity and humanitarianism in a community of Player of the Year athletes that continues to grow each year.

### **Why was the "Play It Forward" Program Created?**

Youth sport participation has seen a steep decline in the past decade, largely due to a lack of resources and limited access to athletic programs. Gatorade is committed to assisting Players of the Year in their service efforts and helping youth-based sports organizations in an effort to increase youth sport participation.

### **Do Gatorade Players of the Year receive scholarships?**

No, Gatorade Player of the Year winners do not receive scholarships.

**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). If you need any additional information, please reach out to [GATORADE.POYQUESTIONS](mailto:GATORADE.POYQUESTIONS).**