

GREAT BEND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE KANSAS FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (December 5, 2025) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Ian Premier of Great Bend High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Kansas Football Player of the Year.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation's best high school athletes for their excellence in sport, academics and community. The award recognizes Premier as Kansas' best high school football player, and he joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Peyton Manning (1993-94, Isidore Newman School, LA), Nick Singleton (2021-22, Governor Mifflin High School, PA) and Keelon Russell (2024-25, Duncanville High School, TX).

The 6-foot-5, 235-pound senior tight end and free safety caught 40 passes for 734 yards and 14 touchdowns this past season, leading the Panthers (11-1) to the Class 5A West Regional championship game. Premier also rushed for 620 yards and 14 scores, averaging 11.1 yards per carry. Defensively, the four-time All-Western Athletic Conference wide receiver and defensive back recorded 68 tackles and intercepted six passes, returning two for scores.

A member of the Western Athletic Conference student leadership council, Premier has volunteered locally with the Great Bend recreation department as a flag football coach. He has also donated his time to multiple community service initiatives through his church. "Ian is the best high school football player I've seen in my 12 years of coaching," said Trevor Powers, head coach of Liberal High School. "He dominates both sides of the ball and can line up anywhere. His size and speed are incredible, but it's the way he moves and his ball skills that blow me away."

Premier has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom and ranks No. 1 in his class. At the time of his selection, he had made a verbal commitment to receive athletic aid to play football at the University of Notre Dame next fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one state winner from each of the 50 states and Washington D.C., in 12 different sports: football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, baseball, softball, boys and girls soccer, and boys and girls track & field. In total, 610 high school athletes are honored each year. From the pool of state winners, one national winner is selected in each of the 12 sports. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the winners in each sport.

As part of Gatorade's commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$6.4 million in grants to winners across more than 2,200 organizations.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit playeroftheyear.gatorade.com or follow us on social media on Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://www.instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X (Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.

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