

MILLARD SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NEBRASKA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (December 5, 2025) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Jett Thomalla of Millard South High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Nebraska 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 Thomalla as Nebraska's 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, 190-pound senior quarterback led the Patriots (12-1) to the Class A state title this past season, sparking an offense that exploded for 204 points in a four-game postseason run to the championship. Ranked as the nation's No. 53 prospect in his class by 247 Sports, Thomalla concluded his record-setting career by completing 72.6 percent of his 266 passes for 3,484 yards and 58 TDs as a senior, including a state-record tying seven scoring strikes in both the state semifinals and title game. He will graduate holding all-class records in career touchdown passes (134) and passing yards (10,253).

Thomalla has volunteered locally as part of an elementary school literacy outreach initiative and as a YMCA youth sports referee. He has also donated his time on behalf of a Special Olympics Unified Sports team and as a football camp counselor for the past three years. "Jett Thomalla is one of the most prolific high school quarterbacks to come out of Nebraska," said Allen Burrell, Jr., head coach of Millard North High School. "What sets him apart is his ability to process the game at a high level and make every throw on the field. His ball placement is elite, and when you combine that with his decision-making and command of the offense, it's easy to see why he's one of the top 10 high school quarterbacks in the country."

Thomalla has maintained a 3.4 GPA in the classroom. At the time of his selection, he had made a verbal commitment to receive athletic aid to play football at the University of Alabama 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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