

REIDSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NORTH CAROLINA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (December 5, 2025) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Kendre Harrison of Reidsville High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade North Carolina 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 Harrison as North Carolina'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).

At the time of his selection, the 6-foot-7, 245-pound senior tight end and defensive end had hauled in 57 passes for 928 yards and 20 touchdowns, leading the Rams (11-2) to the Class 4A state semifinals. On defense, he recorded 60 tackles, including nine for a loss along with 4.5 sacks and 26 quarterback hurries through 13 games. Ranked as the nation's No. 14 football recruit and the No. 61 basketball recruit in his class by ESPN, he batted down two passes at the line of scrimmage and forced a pair of fumbles.

A two-time state champion in basketball, Harrison has volunteered locally as part of a literacy-outreach initiative by serving as a Reading Buddy at two local elementary schools. He's also donated his time to the City of Reidsville Recreation Department. "I don't think there's any question Harrison was the best player in the state this year and it's not even close," said Torrey Nowell, head coach at Durham Hillside High School.

Harrison has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has made a verbal commitment to receive athletic aid to play both football and basketball at the University of Oregon 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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