

CARL ALBERT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE OKLAHOMA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (December 5, 2025) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Delijah Matthews of Carl Albert High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Oklahoma 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 Matthews as Oklahoma'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 200-pound junior running back had rushed for 1,966 yards and 40 touchdowns, averaging 8.8 yards per carry, leading the Titans (13-0) to the Class 5A state title game. Matthews also caught 13 passes for 177 yards and completed 4-of-4 passes for 77 yards and three scores. Oklahoma Prep Redzone Breakout Player of the Year in 2025, he averaged 151.2 yards per game entering the state final and recorded 10 games of 100-plus yards rushing.

Matthews has volunteered locally as a coach for youth athletes in football, basketball and track. "Delijah is a remarkable young man and he's a great representative for this prestigious award," said Mike Dunn, head coach of Carl Albert High School. "He is extremely humble and is always willing to lend a helping hand to his teammates, coaches and peers in his community. All of his coaches would be the first to tell you about his impeccable character before his achievements in athletics."

Matthews has maintained a 3.52 weighted GPA in the classroom. He will begin his senior year of high school 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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