

LA SALLE COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE PENNSYLVANIA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (December 5, 2025) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Joey O'Brien of La Salle College High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Pennsylvania 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 O'Brien as Pennsylvania'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-6, 185-pound senior safety and wide receiver had led the Explorers to a 12-1 record and a berth in the Class 6A state championship game. O'Brien caught 76 passes for 1,150 yards and 18 touchdowns through 13 games. Defensively, he recorded 52 tackles with one interception, 12 pass breakups and a blocked punt. He is a two-time Philadelphia Catholic League Most Valuable Player.

O'Brien has volunteered locally with Operation Santa Claus, delivering toys to underprivileged children, and he's also donated his time as a youth football coach. "Joey is one of the best all-around football players I've ever coached against," said Mike Ewing, head coach of Cardinal O'Hara High School. "He is incredibly twitchy for his size. He erases coverage gaps better than any safety I've seen and offensively, we rolled coverage to him, bracketed him and he was still able to make plays."

O'Brien has maintained a 3.74 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 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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