

LOVETT SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE GEORGIA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (January 9, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Kari Knotts of Lovett School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Georgia Volleyball 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 Knotts as Georgia's best high school volleyball player, and she joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Kerri Walsh Jennings (1995-96, Archbishop Mitty High School, CA), April Ross (1999-00, Newport Harbor High School, CA) and Campbell Flynn (2024-25, Mercy High School, MI).

The 6-foot-3 freshman outside hitter racked up 631 kills for an average of 6.5 per set along with a .501 hitting percentage this past season, leading the Lions (42-3) to the GHSA Private Division state championship. The nation's No. 1 ranked player in her class by PrepVolleyball.com, Knotts added 221 digs and 84 service aces last fall. Also the American Volleyball Coaches Association National Player of the Year, she was named the MVP and Best Spiker of the 2025 NORCECA Girls U19 Pan American Cup while playing for gold medal-winning Team USA.

A Junior National Honor Society member, Knotts has volunteered locally as a mentor at BRXND Sportsplex, a training facility in Atlanta. She also has donated her time as part of multiple community service initiatives through the Martin Luther King Jr. service campaign, The Dream Just Got Bigger. "Beyond her performance on the court, Kari stands out for her discipline, resilience, and leadership," said Lovett School coach Cheryl Weaver. "She continues to navigate adversity with maturity beyond her years, balancing high-level competition with academic and personal responsibility."

Knotts has maintained an A average in the classroom. She will begin her sophomore year of high school in the 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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