

OLATHE NORTH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE KANSAS BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (March 20, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Sam Simmons, Jr. of Olathe North High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Kansas Boys Basketball 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 Simmons as Kansas' best high school boys basketball player, and he joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Jayson Tatum (2015-16, Chaminade College Preparatory School, MO), Cooper Flagg (2023-24, Montverde Academy, FL) and Cameron Boozer (2022-23 & 2024-25, Christopher Columbus High School, FL).

The 5-foot-11, 165-pound senior guard led the Eagles to a 18-4-1 record and the Class 6A state championship this past season. Simmons averaged 14.4 points, 5 assists and 2.7 steals, including 13 points, 9 assists and 7 rebounds in a 67-50 win over Shawnee Mission South in the state title game. Ranked as the state's No.1 recruit in his class by 247Sports, he concluded his prep career as the program leader in single-season assists (126) and steals (80) as well as career steals.

Simmons has donated his time as a member of the Eagle Flight Crew by promoting and supporting various programs at his school. He has also volunteered locally at multiple community youth camps as a counselor and coach. "Sam Simmons is lightning quick," said Ryan Hintz, head coach of Blue Valley West High School. "He jumps off the screen on film and is even quicker in person. He plays on a loaded Olathe North team, so he gets his teammates involved and doesn't shoot it as much as he could. But in clutch moments, he always delivers. You have to game plan for him both offensively and defensively because he is so impactful. We've played against him the last three years and he has shown himself to be an opponent of high character and high competitive spirit. He is an easy kid to root for as he does things the right way."

Simmons has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play basketball at Richmond University this 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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