

REIDSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NORTH CAROLINA 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 Dionte Neal of Reidsville High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade North Carolina 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 Neal as North Carolina’s 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 state’s returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 5-foot-9, 150-pound senior guard averaged 34.7 points and 8.1 assists per game this past season, leading the Rams (23-2) to the Class 4A state championship game. Neal also contributed 6.1 steals and 4.4 rebounds per game while connecting on 56.7 percent of his 3-point attempts (80-of-141). He concluded his prep basketball career with 2,739 points.

Neal has volunteered locally at the Reidsville Family YMCA and with the Reidsville Recreation Department. “Dionte is the best point guard in North Carolina,” said Kenneth Ferguson, head coach of Carver High School. “What makes him special is the way he controls the game. Not only the game, he controls his fans, your fans, the band, the concession stand – you name it, he controls it.”

Neal has maintained a weighted 3.83 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play basketball at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro 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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