

WISCONSIN LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE WISCONSIN 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 Xavier Zens of Wisconsin Lutheran High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Wisconsin 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 Zens as Wisconsin’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).

At the time of his selection, the 6-foot-7, 215-pound senior guard had led the Vikings to a 28-0 record and a berth in the Division 1 state semifinals. Zens averaged 23.6 points, 5.4 rebounds, 4.5 assists and 1.5 steals through 28 games as Wisconsin Lutheran pursued its third straight state title. Zens connected on 61.1 percent of his shots (266-of-435) entering the postseason round of four, including 40.0 percent on 3-pointers (50-of-125). The cousin of 2023-24 Wisconsin Boys Basketball Player of the Year Kon Knueppel, he entered the state semifinals with 1,570 points in his prep basketball career.

Zens has volunteered locally as a youth basketball coach and has donated his time to multiple community service initiatives through his church. “Zavier is incredible,” said Ryan Johnsen, head coach of Greendale High School. “He has had an incredible season as the leader of not only the top-ranked team in the state, but one of the best teams in the country. He scores at all three levels, defends at a high level and is a true leader.”

Zens has maintained a weighted 3.38 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play basketball at the University of Northern Iowa 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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