

FARGO SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NORTH DAKOTA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 1, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Caden Nelson of Fargo South High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade North Dakota Baseball 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 Nelson as North Dakota’s best high school baseball player and he joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Clayton Kershaw (2005-06, Highland Park, TX), MacKenzie Gore (2016-17, Whiteville High School, NC) and Seth Hernandez (2024-25, Corona High School, CA).

At the time of his selection, the 6-foot-2, 190-pound junior right-handed pitcher and third baseman had led the Bruins to a 19-10 record and a berth in North Dakota’s Class A state tournament quarterfinals this spring. Nelson compiled a 5-0 record on the mound through 29 games with 78 strikeouts and a 0.88 WHIP over 39.2 innings. He also batted .495 with eight homers, 35 RBI and a 1.460 OPS. A 2025 North Dakota High School Coaches Association All-State selection, he’s ranked as the nation’s No. 171 prospect in his class and as the state’s No. 1 player by Prep Baseball Report.

Nelson has volunteered locally with the Special Olympics and the Make-A-Wish Foundation. He has also donated his time to Feed My Starving Children, a nonprofit that packages and distributes food to people in developing nations. “I don’t think Nelson took a loss on the mound this season and also hit (eight) home runs,” said Jason Beilke, head coach at West Fargo Sheyenne High School. “Defensively, he made every play look routine at third base. He’s a great kid and I know my players like him as well.”

Nelson has maintained a 3.82 GPA in the classroom. He has verbally committed to play baseball on scholarship at Texas A&M in the fall of 2027.

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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