

**PELHAM HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ALABAMA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 12, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Orlando Avalos of Pelham High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Alabama Boys Soccer 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 Avalos as Alabama’s best high school boys soccer player, and he joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Alecko Eskandarian (1999-00, Bergen Catholic High School, New Jersey), Cristian Roldan (2012-13, El Rancho High School, California) and Dan Klink (2024-25, Loyola Blakefield, Maryland).

The 5-foot-9, 152-pound sophomore midfielder scored 19 goals and passed for 14 assists this past season, leading the Panthers (23-3-1) to the Class 6A state quarterfinals. A two-time Super All-State selection, Avalos played center back as a freshman after recovering from a broken leg that cost him his eighth-grade season. He was a 2025 First Team All-State selection and a First Team Birmingham All-Metro honoree.

A member of the Spanish National Honor Society, Avalos has volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach and referee. “Orlando is a top all-around player and played many different positions for their team this season,” said Matt Hall, head coach of Spain Park High School. “He is very good at keeping possession on the ball and creating numerous scoring chances through his incisive passing. He is a top-notch player.”

Avalos has maintained a weighted 3.66 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his junior year of high school 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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