

**JOHNS CREEK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE GEORGIA 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 Ryan Gottschalk of Johns Creek High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Georgia 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 Gottschalk as Georgia’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-10, 145-pound senior midfielder led the Gladiators to a 22-1 record and the Class AAAAA state championship this past season. Gottschalk scored 24 goals and passed for 12 assists, earning MVP honors by sparking the game-winning tally in Johns Creek’s 2-0 win over River Ridge High School in the state final. He was the Region 7-AAAAA Player of the Year.

Gottschalk has volunteered locally with the Young Men’s Service League and the Heart & Hope for Humanity Foundation. He has also donated his time as a partner player for a child with special needs through North Fulton United FC. “Ryan’s movement off the ball made him hard to mark,” said Ahmed Gathing, head coach of Chattahoochee High School. “Once he received the ball in the attacking third, he was lethal with his first touch and shot. He’s a player that doesn’t stop running and moving off the ball, so he pops up all over the field.”

Gottschalk has maintained an A average in the classroom. He will attend the Coast Guard Academy in Connecticut, where he will play soccer, beginning 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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