

## **PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MICHIGAN BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 12, 2026) — In its 41<sup>st</sup> year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Gunnar Thorhallsson of Portage Central High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Michigan 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 Thorhallsson as Michigan’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 6-foot-8, 200-pound senior keeper led the Mustangs to a 23-0-2 record and the Division 1 state championship this past season. Thorhallsson recorded 19 shutouts and only surrendered seven goals all year. He stopped a penalty kick in a semifinal shootout to help send Portage Central to the title game, then made 10 saves and turned back another PK in a shootout to clinch the crown. The state’s Mr. Soccer honoree, he was also a 2025-26 United Soccer Coaches All-American.

Thorhallsson is a three-year member of his school’s DECA club, which helps prepare future business minds through case studies, leadership activities and various levels of competition, where he was a state finalist. He’s also a member of the JEDI club, which focuses on belonging, fairness and inclusive excellence. “Gunnar was an absolute beast this season as he carried his team to the final,” said JT Hageman, head coach of Mattawan High School. “When we played them, he was not only a force but also controlled the game so well. He takes every free kick from 40 plus yards out and it’s always dangerous. With him being 6-8, he controls his box so well and he’s a great leader. Great players like him step up in big games and he did that all season.”

Thorhallsson has maintained a 4.44 weighted GPA in the classroom. He has signed a professional contract to play soccer at KR Reykjavik in Iceland beginning this summer.

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](https://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X (Twitter) at [x.com/Gatorade](https://x.com/Gatorade).

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