

**SALEM HILLS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE UTAH 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 Brooks Barker of Salem Hills High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Utah 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 Barker as Utah’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, 165-pound senior forward scored 21 goals and passed for 15 assists this past season, leading the Skyhawks (11-9) to the Class 5A state quarterfinals. A two-time 5A First Team All-State selection as a sophomore and junior, Barker was the 2026 Class 5A, Region 8 Most Valuable Player. He concluded his prep soccer career with 68 goals and 38 assists.

The president of the Salem Hills High School senior class, Barker was extensively involved in Unified Sports at his school, a program which pairs youth athletes with intellectually challenged peers in celebration of sport. He has volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach and has donated his time to multiple community service initiatives through his church congregation. “Brooks is essentially unstoppable around the box with his speed on the ball, instinctive movements, technical ability and finishing touch,” said Christian Neff, former head coach of Olympus High School. “He scores goals in a variety of ways and creates chances for teammates. He’s a great player who shines brightest in big moments.”

Barker has maintained a 3.93 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play soccer at Georgetown University, but will complete a two-year LDS mission prior to that.

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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