

## **KAPAUN MT. CARMEL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE KANSAS GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 18, 2026) — In its 41<sup>st</sup> year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Sara Claire Michaelis of Kapaun Mt. Carmel Catholic High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Kansas Girls 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 Michaelis as Kansas’ best high school girls soccer player, and she joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Mallory Swanson (2014-15, Mountain Vista High School, Colorado), Riley Jackson (2021-22, Blessed Trinity Catholic High School, Georgia) and Addison Halpern (2024-25, Rutgers Preparatory School, New Jersey).

The 5-foot-10 junior forward led the Crusaders to a 17-3-1 record and the Class 5A state semifinals this past season. Michaelis scored 39 goals and passed for 21 assists, netting the lone score as Kapaun Mt. Carmel High School beat Blue Valley Southwest High School, 1-0, in the state tournament’s third-place game. Michaelis ranks second in school history with 84 career goals and already holds the school marks for assists (40) and points (208). Ranked as the No. 5 recruit in the South Region by TopDrawerSoccer, she’s a three-time All-Greater Wichita Athletic League honoree and three-time 5A All-State selection. She was also the Class 5A Forward of the Year.

Michaelis has volunteered locally on behalf of Simply Hygiene, an organization that collects and redistributes hygiene products to the underserved. She has also donated her time as a youth soccer camp counselor. “Sara Claire was the most dominant individual player we played against all season,” said Brian Hensyel, head coach of Washburn Rural High School. She’s fast, strong on the ball and makes big plays when her team needs one. She scored two goals against us—both through sheer toughness, grit and determination. Kapaun Mt. Carmel Catholic High School had a great team this year and she was a big reason why.”

Michaelis has maintained a 3.83 weighted GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play soccer on scholarship at Oklahoma State University 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](http://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](https://x.com/Gatorade).

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