

**SALTILLO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MISSISSIPPI 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 Lynley McCarley of Saltillo High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Mississippi 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 McCarley as Mississippi’s 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-8 senior goalkeeper led the Tigers to a 24-4 record and a fourth straight Class 6A state championship this past season, earning game MVP honors in the process. McCarley surrendered just five goals and posted 22 shutouts while scoring five goals herself. A 2-0, title-game win over Long Beach High School capped a four-year postseason run in which she allowed three goals over 16 games. The Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal Player of the Year, she concluded her prep career with 66 shutouts.

A member of the leadership team in her school’s chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, McCarley has volunteered locally with the Make-a-Wish Club at Saltillo High School and as a youth soccer coach. “Lynley was so impactful for her team,” said Josh Metzger, head coach of DeSoto Central High School. “She’s simply a quality keeper.”

McCarley has maintained an A average in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play soccer on scholarship at Arkansas State University 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](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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