

BEARDEN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE
TENNESSEE GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 18, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Jayla Blue of Bearden High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Tennessee 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 Blue as Tennessee’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 forward led the Bulldogs to a 20-2-1 record and the Class AAA state championship this past season. Blue scored 33 goals and passed for 17 assists. A three-time state champion, she’s a four-time All-State selection and the 2025 United Soccer Coaches State Player of the Year. Ranked as the No. 73 recruit in her class by TopDrawerSoccer.com, she concluded her prep soccer career with a school-record 135 goals along with 62 assists.

Through personal donations and support, Blue has sponsored a girl in Peru, who is now herself doing mission work in Guatemala. A member of her school’s chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, she has volunteered in the kitchen at Bradley’s Gift and Home, a local sweets shop. She has also donated her time to multiple community service initiatives through her church. “Jayla was fantastic,” said Roberto Castro, head coach of Knoxville West High School. “She is truly a game-changer on the field. We played them three times and every time she was the difference-maker.”

Blue maintained a weighted 3.44 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play soccer at the University of Tennessee 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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