

**CHAMPLAIN VALLEY UNION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VERMONT 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 Elsa Klein of Champlain Valley Union High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Vermont 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 Klein as Vermont’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-4 junior midfielder and forward led the Redhawks to a 15-1-1 record and the Division I state championship this past season. Klein scored 16 goals and passed for nine assists, netting a goal during Champlain Valley’s 5-2 win over Colchester in the state final. A Free Press Girls Soccer Player of the Year, she was Vermont’s lone 2025 United Soccer Coaches All-American selection.

Klein is a member of her school’s student council as well as its Bring Change to Mind club. She’s also donated her time as a student-leader of the Senior Community Service club. She traveled to Colombia last June on a service-mission trip with her church community. “Elsa is the type of player every coach dreams of having on their team,” said Lindsay Austin Hawley, head coach of South Burlington High School. “She’s a true all-around player who excels both defensively and offensively. Her speed and technical ability make her a constant threat who’s able to create scoring opportunities and finish with precision. At the same time, her defensive awareness and work rate set her apart, as she’s always willing to put in the effort to win the ball back.”

Klein has maintained a 4.13 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school next 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.

###