

## **CARROLLTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE GEORGIA BOYS TRACK AND FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 26, 2026) — In its 41<sup>st</sup> year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Khalen Pinkard of Carrollton High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Georgia Boys Track and Field 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 Pinkard as Georgia’s best high school boys track and field athlete and he joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Alan Webb (2000-01, South Lakes High School, Virginia), Kerron Clement (2002-03, Laporte High School, Texas) and Tate Taylor (2024-25, Harlan High School, Texas).

The 5-foot-8, 140-pound senior swept the horizontal jumps at the Class AAAAAA state meet this past season, leading the Trojans to the team championship. Pinkard soared to a wind-legal career-best 51 feet, 1.75 inches to win the triple jump, which ranked No. 5 nationally among prep boys competitors in 2026. His winning leap of 24-9.25 in the long jump ranked No. 7 nationally among prep boys competitors this spring.

A member of his school’s chapter of the National Honor Society, Pinkard has volunteered locally collecting donations for the NSPIRE Outreach program battling homelessness, addiction and abuse. He also has donated his time to the Little Free Pantries program in his community. “Despite his relatively diminutive frame in events where lanky limbs are often the norm, Pinkard is a true unicorn,” said Rich Gonzalez, editor at PrepCalTrack. “He parlayed his leg spring and explosiveness into 54 victories in a prep career that included four state titles, two state team championships and two adidas All-American selections.”

Pinkard has maintained an A average in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to compete on scholarship at the University of Kentucky 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).

###