

CHASKA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MINNESOTA BOYS TRACK AND FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 26, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Josh Schmidt of Chaska High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Minnesota 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 Schmidt as Minnesota’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 6-foot-1, 175-pound senior pole vaulter broke his own state record this past season, clearing 17 feet, 6 inches at the Metro West Conference Championships, a mark that ranked No. 7 nationally among prep boys competitors in 2026. Schmidt also repeated as the Class AAA state champion with a clearance of 16-6, which matched his previous state record.

A student leader with his school’s chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Schmidt has volunteered locally as a youth wrestling official and has donated his time to multiple community service initiatives through his church. “I was present when Josh established a new state record in the pole vault,” said Nick Meyer, head coach of New Prague High School. “It was an incredible moment. He’s clearly one of the most outstanding high school pole vaulters in the country.”

Schmidt has maintained a weighted 3.29 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to compete on scholarship at North Dakota 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 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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