

**LANETT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ALABAMA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 6, 2019) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Kristian Story of Lanett High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Alabama Football Player of the Year**. Story is the first Gatorade Alabama Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Lanett High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Story as Alabama's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in December, Story joins an elite group of past state football award-winners, including Emmitt Smith (1986-87, Escambia High School, Fla.), Matthew Stafford (2005-06 Highland Park High School, Texas) and Christian McCaffrey (2012-13, 2013-14, Valor Christian High School, Colo.).

At the time of his selection, the 6-foot-2, 210-pound senior quarterback and safety had led the Panthers to a 13-0 record and a berth in the Class 1A state championship game against Mars Hill Bible High. Story passed for 2,677 yards and 31 touchdowns in addition to rushing for 1,068 yards and 15 scores through 13 games. A three-time First Team All-State honoree, he entered the title game with a state-record 171 total touchdowns and 12,947 yards of total offense, 10 yards shy of the Alabama record.

Story has volunteered locally at a nursing home and as a youth football coach in addition to donating his time to multiple community service initiatives through his church youth group. "Kristian is the kind of player that is hard to defend," said Buster Daniel, head coach of Valley High. "He prolongs plays with his feet, gets out of the pocket and throws the ball downfield, or he just out-thinks you. He's a complete player."

Story has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom. He has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at the University of Alabama next fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track and field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Story joins recent Gatorade Alabama Football Players of the Year Bo Nix (2018-19, Pinson Valley High School), Asa Martin (2017-18, Austin High School), Jaylond Adams (2016-17, Minor High School), Ty Pigrome (2015-16, Clay-Chalkville High School) and Kerryon Johnson (2014-15, Madison Academy), among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Story has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of his choosing. He is also eligible to submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit www.Gatorade.com/POY, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

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