

**ST. JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE CONNECTICUT 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 **Jack Wallace of St. Joseph High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Connecticut Football Player of the Year**. Wallace is the first Gatorade Connecticut Football Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Joseph 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 Wallace as Connecticut'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, Wallace 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.).

The 6-foot, 175-pound junior quarterback had led the Cadets (10-0) to a berth in the Class L state quarterfinals at the time of his selection. In his first year as a starter, Wallace passed for 1,915 yards and 36 touchdowns through 10 games, completing 116-of-172 passes (67.4 percent). He was an Honorable Mention All-League selection at cornerback as a sophomore.

Wallace has volunteered locally as part of fundraising campaigns toward research to combat breast cancer, diabetes and heart disease. He has also donated his time on behalf of the Special Olympics, and as a youth football coach. "Jack is a very good high school quarterback," said Duncan DellaVolpe, head coach of Warde High. "He is a heck of an athlete. He can throw and run, keep plays alive and really doesn't make any mistakes."

Wallace has maintained an A-minus average in the classroom and represents one of the state's top academic candidates in meeting the Gatorade award's broad criteria. He will begin his senior year of high school 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.

Wallace joins recent Gatorade Connecticut Football Players of the Year Cornelius Johnson (2018-19, Brunswick School), Spencer Lockwood (2017-18, Killingly High School), Ben Mason (2016-17, Newtown High School), Mark Evanchick (2015-16, Darien High School) and Zach Allen (2014-15, New Canaan High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Wallace 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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