

**COVINGTON CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE KENTUCKY FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (December 6, 2019) — In its 35<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced **Michael Mayer of Covington Catholic High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Kentucky Football Player of the Year**. Mayer is the first Gatorade Kentucky Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Covington Catholic 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 Mayer as Kentucky'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, Mayer 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-5, 235-pound senior tight end and linebacker had led the Colonels (14-0) to a berth in the Class 5A state championship game at the time of his selection. Mayer caught 45 passes for 902 yards and 15 touchdowns through 14 games, also recording 90 tackles and four interceptions to lead a defense that allowed 6.1 points per game entering the title tilt. A First Team All-State honoree, he was selected to play in the 2020 All-American Bowl.

Also a basketball standout, Mayer has volunteered locally on behalf of Hosea House, Rose Garden Home Mission and a soup kitchen. "Michael Mayer is one of the best football players I've ever seen," said Brian Weinrich, head coach at Highlands High. "Every team knows he's going to get the ball and no one can stop him. He's just as dominant, if not more dominant, on the defensive side of the ball."

Mayer has maintained a 3.49 GPA in the classroom. He has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at the University of Notre Dame 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.

Mayer joins recent Gatorade Kentucky Football Players of the Year Wandale Robinson (2018-19, Western Hills High School), Rondale Moore (2017-18, Trinity High School), Jamale Carothers (2016-17, Bowling Green High School), Kash Daniel (2015-16, Paintsville High School) and Elijah Sindelar (2014-15, Caldwell County High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Mayer 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](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).