

**MANCHESTER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE OHIO 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 **Ethan Wright of Manchester High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Ohio Football Player of the Year**. Wright is the first Gatorade Ohio Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Manchester 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 Wright as Ohio'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, Wright 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-1, 200-pound senior running back and defensive back rushed for 2,385 yards and 36 touchdowns this past season, leading the Panthers (9-4) to the Division V, Region 17 championship game. Wright also passed for 316 yards and two scores, and caught a TD pass. A three-time Division V First Team All-State selection, he totaled 146 tackles, three sacks and four interceptions along with a 37.2-yard punting average. He returned both an interception and a fumble for touchdowns.

Wright has volunteered at his local library and he has donated his time to multiple community service activities through his church. "Ethan has been unbelievable. There isn't anything he can't do on the field," said AJ Sarbaugh, head coach of Fairless High. "He is a complete game-changer and difference-maker for his team. The ways he can impact a game are countless."

Wright has maintained a 3.46 GPA in the classroom. Taking advantage of NCAA early signing rules, Wright has inked a financial-aid agreement that will pave the way for him to enroll at Duke University. He will graduate from high school in January and attend classes in the spring semester.

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.

Wright joins recent Gatorade Ohio Football Players of the Year Cade Stover (2018-19, Lexington High School), Ra'veion Hargrove (2017-18, Trotwood-Madison High School), Michael Warren (2016-17, Central Catholic High School), Tommy Kraemer (2015-16, Elder High School) and Joe Burrow (2014-15, Athens High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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