

**SOUTHERN COLUMBIA AREA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE
NAMED
GATORADE PENNSYLVANIA 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 **Julian Fleming of Southern Columbia Area High School** as its **2019-20 Gatorade Pennsylvania Football Player of the Year**. Fleming is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Southern Columbia Area 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 Fleming as Pennsylvania'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, Fleming 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, 200-pound senior wide receiver had led the Tigers to a 15-0 record and a berth in the Class 2A state championship game. The state's returning Gatorade Football Player of the Year, Fleming caught 68 passes for 1,448 yards and 21 touchdowns through 15 games. The state career record holder for TD receptions and receiving yards, he is a two-time Class 2A Player of the Year, ranks as the nation's No. 4 recruit in the Class of 2020 as rated by ESPN and has been selected to play in the 2020 Under Armour All-America Game.

Also a basketball and track standout, Fleming has volunteered locally on behalf of a soup kitchen and youth sports programs. "Fleming is the most dynamic player I've coached against or seen play in Pennsylvania in recent memory," said Henry Hynoski, head coach at Shamokin Area High School. "He's a big, strong and explosive quick-twitch athlete with breakaway speed. He catches the ball over the middle too and he's not afraid to take a hit."

Fleming has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom. He has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at Ohio State University 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.

Two-time winner Fleming joins Gatorade Pennsylvania Football Players of the Year Phil Jurkovec (2017-18, Pine-Richland High School), Lamont Wade (2016-17, Clairton High School), Brandon McIlwain (2015-16, Council Rock High School North) and Ben DiNucci (2014-15, Pine-Richland High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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