

**TAYLORSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MISSISSIPPI FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 13, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Ty Keyes of Taylorsville High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade Mississippi Football Player of the Year. Keyes is the second Gatorade Mississippi Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Taylorsville 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 Keyes as Mississippi's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Keyes 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 state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 6-foot-2, 205-pound senior quarterback led the Tartars to a 10-1 record and a second-straight Class 2A state championship this past season. Keyes passed for 2,546 yards and 30 touchdowns, also rushing for 560 yards and six scores. A three-time Class 2A Mr. Football winner, he concluded his prep football career with 14,565 yards and 155 TD passes.

Keyes has volunteered locally at the Boys and Girls Club of Covington County and as a youth football and baseball coach. He has also donated his time to multiple community service activities through his church youth group. "Ty Keyes is a once-in-a-lifetime player," said Dan Brady, head coach of Bay Springs High. "He is the complete package—a great leader with exceptional character, and a playmaker on the field."

Keyes has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play football on scholarship at the University of Southern Mississippi this 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 & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which works with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Two-time winner Keyes joins recent Gatorade Mississippi Football Players of the Year Nakobe Dean (2018-19, Horn Lake High School), Tony Brown (2017-18, East Central High School), and Cam Akers (2016-17, Clinton High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Keyes has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Keyes is also eligible to submit a 30-second video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$2.7 million across 1,117 organizations.

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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com, on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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