

**NASHUA NORTH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEW HAMPSHIRE 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 Curtis Harris-Lopez of Nashua North High School as its 2020-21 Gatorade New Hampshire Football Player of the Year. Harris-Lopez is the first Gatorade New Hampshire Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Nashua North 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 Harris-Lopez as New Hampshire'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, Harris-Lopez 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, 180-pound senior quarterback and free safety led the Titans to a 7-0 record and the Division I state championship this past season. Harris-Lopez rushed for 1,056 yards and 18 touchdowns, averaging 9.6 yards per carry. He also passed for four scores. Defensively, he compiled 33 tackles and one interception, returning it for a touchdown. He was the 2018 Nashua Telegraph Player of the Year as a sophomore and is a four-time First Team All-Conference honoree.

A member of the Nashua North National Honor Society, Harris-Lopez has volunteered locally with his school's Student Athlete Leadership Council. "Curtis is the best player I have seen in the last 15 years," said John Trisciani, head coach of Bishop Guertin High. "He was dominant running the football, but could also throw. Unstoppable. As good as he was on offense, he was just as talented on defense."

Harris-Lopez has maintained a weighted 4.24 GPA in the classroom. He has made a verbal commitment to attend the College of the Holy Cross, where he will play football, beginning 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.

Harris-Lopez joins recent Gatorade New Hampshire Football Players of the Year Malcolm Bussey (2019-20, St. Paul's School), Ryan Toscano (2018-19, Bedford High School), Andrew Duval (2017-18, Goffstown High School), and Garrett Macomber (2016-17, Plymouth Regional High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Harris-Lopez has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Harris-Lopez 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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