

**RUTLAND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VERMONT FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 7, 2021) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Slade Postemski of Rutland High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Vermont Football Player of the Year**. Postemski is the sixth Gatorade Vermont Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Rutland 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 Postemski as Vermont'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, Postemski joins an elite alumni association of state 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-2, 190-pound senior wide receiver and defensive back caught 46 passes for 776 yards and 18 touchdowns this past season, leading the Raiders (8-1) to the Division I state semifinals. On defense, Postemski recorded 32 tackles with four interceptions, returning one for a score. He also averaged 33 yards per punt.

A member of the Spanish National Honor Society and the Rutland High Athletic Leadership Council, Postemski has volunteered locally through his school's Key Club and Environmental Club. "When we played Rutland, our entire defensive scheme was based on where Slade was aligned," said Rich Alercio, head coach of St. Johnsbury Academy. "Slade was a threat to score from any position and anywhere on the field."

Postemski has maintained a weighted 3.61 GPA in the classroom. He has made a verbal commitment to attend Bowdoin College, where he will play football, beginning 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 & 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Postemski joins recent Gatorade Vermont Football Players of the Year Gavin Johnson (2020-21, Mount Anthony Union High School), Joey McCoy (2019-20, Burr & Burton Academy), Jake Cady (2018-19, St. Johnsbury Academy), and Tyler Hamilton (2017-18, Hartford High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, Postemski has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. Postemski is also eligible to submit a short 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 \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 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 or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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