

**T.F RIGGS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE SOUTH DAKOTA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 6, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Lincoln Kienholz** of **T.F Riggs High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade South Dakota Football Player of the Year**. Kienholz is the third Gatorade South Dakota Football Player of the Year to be chosen from T.F Riggs 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 Kienholz as South Dakota's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in January, Kienholz joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Trevor Lawrence (2018-19 & 2016-17, Cartersville High School, Ga.), Matthew Stafford (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas) and Emmitt Smith (1986-87, Escambia High School, Fla.).

The 6-foot-3, 185-pound senior quarterback amassed 4,857 total yards and 70 touchdowns while leading the Governors (12-0) to their sixth-consecutive AA state championship. Kienholz set South Dakota's single-season passing record last fall, completing 197 of 296 passes for 3,422 yards and 46 touchdowns against just six interceptions. He also rushed for 1,435 yards and 24 touchdowns and will graduate as a three-time state championship game MVP.

Kienholz is a member of the National Honor Society, serves as a Gov2Go mentor and volunteers locally as a youth football coach. "A significant reality of Lincoln Kienholz's performance on and off the field is his leadership presence with his teammates," said Mitchell High School coach Kent Van Overschelde. "Without question, he is talented and capable of changing the tides of a game, whether throwing into a tight window or making a dynamic play running the football. His composure and body language exude confidence and his team follows."

Kienholz has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. At the time of his selection, he'd made a verbal commitment to play football on scholarship at The Ohio State University 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Kienholz joins recent Gatorade South Dakota Football Players of the Year Jacob Knuth (2021-22, Harrisburg High School), Tate Johnson (2020-21, Brandon Valley High School), Garrett Stout (2019-20, T.F. Riggs High School), and Canyon Bauer (2018-19, O'Gorman High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Being a Gatorade Player of the Year means paying it forward for the next generation. Through Gatorade's Play it Forward initiative, every Player of the Year receives a grant to give to one of Gatorade's social impact partners, supporting Gatorade's ambition to fuel the future of sport. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

For nearly 40 years, Gatorade has honored high school athletes at the top of their game as teammates, supporting their communities and achieving academic success. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes and community leaders, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport.

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.