

**SKYRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE UTAH 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 **Smith Snowden** of **Skyridge High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Utah Football Player of the Year**. Snowden is the first Gatorade Utah Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Skyridge 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 Snowden as Utah'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, Snowden 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 5-foot-10, 175-pound senior cornerback led the Falcons to a 13-1 record and a 6A state championship this past season. Snowden finished the season with 28 tackles, six for a loss, along with six interceptions, one of which he returned for a touchdown. He was also credited with breaking up eight passes. On offense, he caught three passes for 29 yards and added a kick return for a touchdown.

Snowden has volunteered locally packing supply boxes for the people of Ukraine. He also has donated his time to a fundraiser car wash to raise money for a new playground at a local elementary school. "He is great in one-on-one coverage and very difficult to throw against," said American Fork High School head coach Aaron Behm. "He has great ball skills and is able to help his team in a lot of ways, and he's very dangerous after an interception. Having a defensive player who can affect the game like he can and also put points on the board makes him so valuable to his team."

Snowden has maintained a 3.68 GPA in the classroom. At the time of his selection, he remained undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

Snowden joins recent Gatorade Utah Football Players of the Year Cody Hagen (2021-22, Corner Canyon High School), Jaxson Dart (2020-21, Corner Canyon High School), Cole Hagen (2019-20, Corner Canyon High School), and Puka Nacua (2018-19, Orem 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.

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