

**INDEPENDENCE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WEST VIRGINIA 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 **Judah Price** of **Independence High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade West Virginia Football Player of the Year**. Price is the first Gatorade West Virginia Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Independence 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 Price as West Virginia'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, Price 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-9, 188-pound senior running back and cornerback led the Patriots to a 13-0 record and a AA state championship this past season. Price rushed for 2,587 yards and 49 touchdowns, averaging 9.87 yards per carry, while adding nine receptions for 195 yards and two TDs. He also set a single-season state-record with 42 two-point conversions and broke the state's single-season scoring record with 396 points. Named captain of the Class AA All-State team, he rushed for 396 yards, a record in a state championship game, and scored four touchdowns as Independence High School beat Herbert Hoover High School 42-7 in the title game.

Price has volunteered locally for the Women's Resource Center, helping abused women and children. He also has donated his time announcing, working the concession stand and picking up trash in the bleachers at middle school football games. "Lightning in a bottle," said North Marion High School head coach Daran Hayes. "We did a nice job against him in the running game (by that I mean held him to about 100 yards in a blowout loss for us) and he still impacted the game with a TD reception out of the slot and several tackles and pass breakups on the defensive end."

Price has maintained a 3.9 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.

Price joins recent Gatorade West Virginia Football Players of the Year Hudson Clement (2021-22, Martinsburg High School), Blake Hartman (2020-21, Musselman High School), JJ Roberts (2019-20, Cabell Midland High School), and Graeson Malashevich (2018-19, Spring Valley 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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