

**SARALAND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ALABAMA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 3, 2023) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Ryan Williams** of **Saraland High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Alabama Football Player of the Year**. Williams is the first Gatorade Alabama Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Saraland High School.

The award, which celebrates the nation's top high school athletes for excellence on the field, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes Williams as Alabama's best high school football player. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport, touting an all-star group of alumni that includes Emmitt Smith (1986-87, Escambia High School, Fla.), Peyton Manning (1993-94, Isidore Newman School, La.) and Jackson Arnold (2022-23, John H. Guyer High School, Texas).

The state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 6-foot-1, 175-pound junior wide receiver caught 71 passes for 1,320 yards and 19 touchdowns this past season, leading the Spartans (13-1) to the Class 6A state championship game. Williams also rushed for 269 yards and seven scores, threw a touchdown pass and returned both a punt and kickoff for TDs. Ranked as the nation's No. 3 recruit in the Class of 2025 by 247Sports.com, he was the state's 2022 Mr. Football winner.

A member of the Saraland High student council, Williams has volunteered locally as part of multiple fundraising campaigns to support his school. He has also donated his time on behalf of the Special Olympics and as a youth football coach. "Ryan Williams is beyond electric and will have a great future," said Justin Hannah, head coach of Murphy High. "He can score at any moment."

Williams has maintained a weighted 3.47 GPA in the classroom. He has reclassified to graduate as a member of the Class of 2024 and has made a verbal commitment to play football on scholarship at the University of Alabama 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.

Two-time winner Williams joins recent Gatorade Alabama Football Players of the Year Earl Woods (2021-22, Hueytown High School), Conner Harrell (2020-21, Thompson High School), and Kristian Story (2019-20, Lanett High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

As part of Gatorade's commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$4.9 million across more than 1,600 organizations.

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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