

**AVON OLD FARMS STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE CONNECTICUT 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 Puglisi** of **Avon Old Farms** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Connecticut Football Player of the Year**. Puglisi is the second Gatorade Connecticut Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Avon Old Farms.

The award, which celebrates the nation's top high school athletes for excellence on the field, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes Puglisi as Connecticut'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 6-foot-3, 210-pound senior quarterback passed for 1,758 yards and 14 touchdowns this past season, completing 66.9 percent of his throws for 10.0 yards per attempt to lead the Winged Beavers to a 7-3 record in the New England Preparatory School Athletic Council (NEPSAC). Puglisi also rushed for 361 yards and three touchdowns, averaging 5.9 yards per carry. A Nike Elite 11 finalist, he is ranked as the nation's No. 112 prospect in the Class of 2024 by ESPN.

Puglisi has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics and has helped raise money for cancer research through his work with A Shot For Life, a sports-based non-profit organization based in Massachusetts. "Ryan is a tremendous competitor and high-character kid with an elite arm," said Hotchkiss School head coach Dempsey Quinn. "He plays the game the right way and is fun to watch on the field. He makes all the throws; he's a stud. From a talent perspective, he's in a league of his own."

Puglisi has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play football on scholarship at the University of Georgia 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.

Puglisi joins recent Gatorade Connecticut Football Players of the Year John Neider (2022-23, Jonathan Law High School), Victor Rosa (2021-22, Bristol Central High School), Wilfredo Aybar (2020-21, Cheshire Academy), and Jack Wallace (2019-20, St. Joseph 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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