

**MONTICELLO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE IOWA 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 **Preston Ries** of **Monticello High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Iowa Football Player of the Year**. Ries is the first Gatorade Iowa Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Monticello 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 Ries as Iowa’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-2, 215-pound senior quarterback passed for 2,559 yards and 24 touchdowns this past season, leading the Panthers (11-2) to their third state 2A semifinals appearance in program history (the others coming in 1972 and 1977). Ranked as the state’s No. 7 recruit in by 247Sports, Ries completed 63 percent of his throws while also rushing 251 times for 1,926 yards and 33 scores, averaging 7.6 yards per carry. On defense, he recorded 97.5 tackles, including 27.5 tackles for a loss, along with five sacks. As Monticello’s primary punter, he averaged 35.5 yards per kick. The Iowa Print Writers Association Class 2A All-State Team Captain and a 3-time All-State selection, he will graduate as Iowa’s career leader in total yards from scrimmage.

Ries has volunteered locally on behalf of the Camp Courageous Car Show in addition to assisting in the cleanout of city buildings. He serves as a DARE Role Model and a middle school classroom mentor in addition to donating his time at the Veteran’s Day Breakfast, the Community Garden and athletic department concession stands. He has also built beds for Sleep in Heavenly Peace and coached at camps for youth athletes. “Preston Ries looked every bit a top prospect at every position he played this season,” said Alyssa Hertel of the Des Moines Register. “He was a true dual-threat quarterback, finding success in the air and on the ground. Possessing excellent vision, Ries shines on defense, where he identifies which play to make almost as soon as the ball is snapped. He’s a relentless defender and a hard tackler, and he showed in the state tournament that he was stronger and more conditioned than some of the competition. Ries may not have won a state championship, but it was clear to see that across all five of Iowa’s high school classifications, there were few other players—maybe none—who had more of an individual impact on their team’s success.”

Ries has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play football on scholarship at the University of Iowa 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.

Ries joins recent Gatorade Iowa Football Players of the Year Abu Sama (2022-23, Southeast Polk High School), Aaron Graves (2021-22, Southeast Valley High School), Cooper DeJean (2020-21, OABCIG High School), and Hunter Dekkers (2019-20, West Sioux 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.