

**LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE SOUTH DAKOTA 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 **Jack Smith** of **Lincoln High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade South Dakota Football Player of the Year**. Smith is the third Gatorade South Dakota Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Lincoln 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 Smith as South Dakota'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-0, 190-pound senior wideout caught 72 passes for 1,171 yards and 21 touchdowns, leading the Patriots (12-0) to the Class AAA state championship. Smith added another 576 all-purpose yards and 3 scores as a returning specialist and running back. The two-time All-State selection will graduate as the state's career leader in receptions and career receiving yards. He is also the Class AAA record-holder for single-game receiving yards, receptions and touchdown receptions.

A member of his school's Latin Club while studying the language, Smith has volunteered locally on behalf of Best Buddies, the Miracle League and the Sioux Falls Marathon. He has also donated his time to the American Legion's Rookies youth baseball program, the Veterans Pancake Feed, the Veterans Tree Planting and The Banquet, feeding the unhoused. "Jack Smith had one of the finest high school football careers in South Dakota history," said Jason Andrea of Midco TV. "He faced more double teams than anyone in the state this season and found a way to collect 21 receiving touchdowns, anyway. I've covered high school football in South Dakota for over two decades and he is easily one of the most dynamic and selfless players I've seen. He rewrote the record book in Class AAA; in fact, only two players in AAA history have recorded at least 70 receptions in a season and Smith has done it twice."

Smith has maintained a weighted GPA of 4.09 in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play football on scholarship at South Dakota State University 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.

Smith joins recent Gatorade South Dakota Football Players of the Year Lincoln Kienholz (2022-23, T.F Riggs High School), Jacob Knuth (2021-22, Harrisburg High School), Tate Johnson (2020-21, Brandon Valley High School), and Garrett Stout (2019-20, T.F Riggs 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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