

**FREEDOM HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE VIRGINIA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (January 3, 2024) — In its 39<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Jeff Overton** of **Freedom High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Virginia Football Player of the Year**. Overton is the first Gatorade Virginia Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Freedom 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 Overton as Virginia'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 5-foot-10, 185-pound junior running back and defensive back led the Eagles to a 14-0 record and a second straight Class 6 state championship this past season. Overton rushed for 2,713 yards and 41 touchdowns, averaging 13.0 yards per carry. He also caught 15 passes for 341 yards and three scores. The 2023 Class 6, Region B Offensive Player of the Year, Overton was a First Team All-Region selection as both a running back and safety. Defensively, he compiled 59 tackles and five interceptions, returning one for a score.

Overton has volunteered locally on behalf of the Helping Others turkey drive, and he has also donated his time as a youth football camp counselor. "Jeff Overton is the best running back we have faced all season," said John Robinette, head coach of Forest Park High School. "He takes runs that would be 4-5 yards and creates touchdowns. He is a constant threat that must be accounted for in the backfield."

Overton has maintained a 3.26 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his senior year of high school 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.

Overton joins recent Gatorade Virginia Football Players of the Year Tony Rojas (2022-23, Fairfax High School), Zach Rice (2021-22, Liberty Christian Academy), Kelvin Gilliam (2020-21, Highland Springs High School), and TreVeyon Henderson (2019-20, Hopewell 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY), Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade) and Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).

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