

**LAKE STEVENS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WASHINGTON 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 **Kolton Matson** of **Lake Stevens High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Washington Football Player of the Year**. Matson is the third Gatorade Washington Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Lake Stevens 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 Matson as Washington'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, 180-pound junior quarterback led the Vikings to a 13-1 record and a second straight Class 4A state championship this past season. Matson passed for 3,388 yards and 49 touchdowns, including four scores in Lake Stevens' 31-6 win over Graham-Kapowsin High School in the state final to clinch the program's second consecutive title. He also rushed for five touchdowns on the season.

Matson has volunteered locally as a youth football coach. "Kolton is a talented player that you watched grow and develop as the season went on," said Mason Siddick, head coach of Jackson High. "He's a big reason the Vikings repeated this year. You could tell that Kolton really put the team on his back."

Matson has maintained a 3.52 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.

Matson joins recent Gatorade Washington Football Players of the Year Jayden Limar (2022-23, Lake Stevens High School), Josh Wood (2021-22, Graham-Kapowsin High School), Sam Huard (2020-21, Kennedy Catholic High School), and Emeka Egbuka (2019-20, Steilacoom 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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