

**FOLSOM HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE CALIFORNIA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 6, 2024) — In its 40th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Ryder Lyons** of **Folsom High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade California Football Player of the Year**. Lyons is the second Gatorade California Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Folsom High School.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes for their success on the field, in the classroom and in the community. The award distinguishes Lyons as California’s best high school football player, and he joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as Emmitt Smith (1986-87, Escambia High School, Fl.), Peyton Manning (1993-94, Isidore Newman School, La.) and DJ Lagway (2023-24, Willis High School, Texas).

At the time of his selection, the 6-foot-3, 220-pound junior quarterback had led the Bulldogs to a 12-1 record and a berth in the CIF Division 1-AA North Regional championship game. Lyons passed for 2,874 yards and 44 touchdowns while also rushing for 556 yards and 12 scores through 13 games, leading Folsom to the Sac-Joaquin Section Division I Tournament title. Ranked as the nation’s No. 4 recruit in the Class of 2026 by Rivals.com, he was the 2023 Sacramento Bee Player of the Year.

Lyons has volunteered locally as a youth football coach and has donated his time to multiple community service initiatives through his church youth group. “Ryder is a great player,” said Casey Taylor, head coach of Oak Ridge High School. “His numbers and wins speak for themselves. His escapeability really stands out to us. He scrambles and runs for big yardage, and passes the ball for big plays once you feel you have him down. They go to him when they need a big play and he usually delivers.”

Lyons has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his senior year of high school next fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states across 12 different high school sports - 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.

Lyons joins recent Gatorade California Football Players of the Year Julian Sayin (2023-24, Carlsbad High School), Malachi Nelson (2022-23 & 2020-21, Los Alamitos High School) and Tetairoa McMillan (2021-22, Servite 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, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$5.6 million in grants to winners across more than 2,000 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 Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://www.instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.

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