

**GRIMSLEY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE NORTH CAROLINA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (December 6, 2024) — In its 40<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Faizon Brandon of Grimsley High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade North Carolina Football Player of the Year**. Brandon is the first Gatorade North Carolina Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Grimsley 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 Brandon as North Carolina’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-4, 202-pound junior quarterback had passed for 2,159 yards, 27 touchdowns and just one interception this past season, leading the Whirlies (13-0) to the Class 4A postseason quarterfinals. Ranked as the nation’s No. 1 prospect in his class by 247 Sports, Brandon completed 76.3 percent of his throws and averaged 12.7 yards per attempt through 13 games. He also rushed for 564 yards and eight scores, averaging 9.9 yards per carry.

Brandon has volunteered locally on behalf of the Under the Bridge Project to support the homeless as well as with the Kiser Middle School Tiger Mentoring Program. He has also donated his time to both school cleanup and flag football youth service projects in addition to serving as a DJ Reader NFL Football Kids Camp instructor. “Faizon Brandon is always in total control of the game,” said Tiesuan Brown, head coach of Mount Tabor High School. “He never sweats the small things, and he’s a great leader on and off the field.”

Brandon has maintained a weighted 3.83 GPA in the classroom. He has made a verbal commitment to receive athletic aid to play football at the University of Tennessee beginning in the fall of 2026.

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.

Brandon joins recent Gatorade North Carolina Football Players of the Year David Sanders (2023-24, Providence Day School), Jadyn Davis (2022-23, Providence Day School), Omarion Hampton (2021-22, Cleveland High School) and Jalon Walker (2020-21, Salisbury 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](http://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](https://x.com/Gatorade).