

SHEYENNE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE NORTH DAKOTA 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 **Kade Pietrzak** of **Sheyenne High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade North Dakota Football Player of the Year**. Pietrzak is the first Gatorade North Dakota Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Sheyenne 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 Pietrzak as North Dakota’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).

The 6-foot-5, 260-pound two-way senior lineman recorded 54 tackles including 25 for a loss, 32 quarterback hurries and five sacks this past season, leading the Mustangs (10-2) to the Class AAA state title game. Pietrzak logged two passes defended, a forced fumble and a fumble recovery as well. He was also the anchor of a line that blocked for an offense that averaged 26.9 points per game. Ranked as the nation’s No. 333 recruit by 247Sports, he is a two-time All-State selection.

Pietrzak has volunteered locally on behalf of Feed My Starving Children and a church league basketball program. He has also donated his time coaching youth athletes in weightlifting and at football camps. “Kade is a special athlete,” said Troy Mattern, head coach of Shanley High School. “I’ve been coaching North Dakota high school football for the past 21 seasons, and not many have been able to control or disrupt a game like him. His physicality and strength are unmatched and he caused a matchup nightmare for all opponents. He is very deserving of this award and, to me, he was the best player in the state this year.

Pietrzak has maintained a weighted 4.05 GPA in the classroom. He has made a verbal commitment to receive athletic aid to play football at the University of Nebraska 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.

Pietrzak joins recent Gatorade North Dakota Football Players of the Year Peder Haugo (2023-24, Fargo North High School), Michael Rostberg (2022-23, Shanley High School), Lucas Schweigert (2021-22, Century High School) and Andrew Leingang (2020-21, Century 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.