

**PRINCETON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEW JERSEY VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 9, 2025) — In its 40th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Naomi Lygas** of **Princeton High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade New Jersey Volleyball Player of the Year**. Lygas is the first Gatorade New Jersey Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Princeton 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 court, in the classroom and in the community. The award distinguishes Lygas as New Jersey’s best high school volleyball player, and she joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as April Ross (1999-00, Newport Harbor High School, Ca.), Kerri Walsh Jennings (1995-96, Archbishop Mitty High School, Ca.) and Ayden Ames (2023-24, Prosper High School, Texas).

The 5-foot-10 junior outside hitter recorded 318 kills and 175 digs this past season, leading the Tigers (28-1) to the Group 3 state title. Lygas added 37 service aces and compiled a kill percentage of .486 along with a hitting percentage of .371 at net. The Central New Jersey Player of the Year and a two-time First Team All-State selection, she already owns the program record with 852 kills entering her senior year.

A longtime member of Girl Scouts of the USA and a Scouts Silver Award-winner for service, Lygas has volunteered locally by mentoring middle school students and also donates her time as a Teen Pep educator for Princeton High School freshmen. In addition, she has participated in her school’s Red Cross Community Service Group and Operation Smile Group. She is currently a founding member of an anti-vaping program that is now under development. “Lygas is about as dynamic a pin hitter as we have in the state,” said Caryn Shanstine, head coach at Northern Highlands High School. “She has the ability to make every shot and the power to go along with it. She had double-digit kills in every game of the state tournament. Princeton has a good team overall, but they’ve lost only two games and have won two group championships since Naomi’s presence on the team was established as a sophomore. I don’t think that’s a coincidence.”

Lygas has maintained a weighted 4.3 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to receive athletic aid to play beach volleyball at Tulane University 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.

Lygas joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Volleyball Players of the Year Taylor Miller (2023-24, Northern Valley Demarest High School), Brookelyn Talmadge (2022-23, Immaculate Heart Academy), JoAnna Andrews (2021-22, Williamstown High School) and MacKenzie Wiggins (2020-21, Sparta 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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