

CLAYTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MISSOURI BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 12, 2025) — In its 40th year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Sam Leonard** of **Clayton High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Missouri Boys Soccer Player of the Year**.

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 Leonard as Missouri's best high school boys soccer player, and he joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as Ben Bender (2019-20, Calvert Hall College High School, M.D.) and Ransford Gyan (2022-23 & 2023-24, St. Benedict's Preparatory School, N.J.).

The 5-foot-10, 155-pound senior forward led the Greyhounds to a 20-4 record and the Class 2 state championship this past season. Leonard scored 19 goals and passed for 10 assists, including setting up a goal in Clayton's 3-0 win over St. Michael's High School in the state final. The Class 2 co-Offensive Player of the Year, he was also the Suburban Central Conference Player of the Year in his lone year of playing high school soccer instead of club only.

Leonard has volunteered locally with SPENSA, a non-profit soccer program for young people with special needs. "Sam has an exceptional work rate and is one of the more unselfish players I have ever coached," said Brendan Taylor, head coach of Clayton High School. "He was humble, always bought in and was one of the hardest workers from the start. Nearly all of his assists could have been goals for himself, but he dished the ball to his teammates to diversify the offense."

Leonard has maintained a 3.56 in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play soccer at Creighton University this 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.

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, Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY and X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.

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