

**EASTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE SOUTH CAROLINA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 18, 2025) — In its 40<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Payton Nutzman** of **Eastside High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade South Carolina Girls 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 Nutzman as South Carolina's best high school girls soccer player, and she joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as Morgan Gautrat (2010-11, Frederica Academy, Ga.), Mallory Swanson (2014-15, Mountain Vista High School, Colo.), Kennedy Fuller (2022-23 & 2021-22, Southlake Carroll High School, Texas).

The 5-foot-4 senior forward and midfielder led the Eagles to a 19-3 record and the Class 5A, Division 2 state championship this past season. Nutzman scored 35 goals and passed for 14 assists, netting two goals in Eastside High School’s 3-2, overtime win over Chapin High School in the state final. Nutzman also scored overtime game-winners in the second round and quarterfinals of the state tournament, one year after scoring in overtime to win the 2024 Class 4A state championship. She concluded her prep soccer career with 74 goals and 43 assists.

A member of the Eastside High School Beta Club, Nutzman has volunteered locally with the Carolina Relief Project, which provided relief in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene. She has also donated her time as a lifeguard and swim instructor. “Payton is a triple-threat,” said Kelsey Black, head coach of Clover High School. “She is fast, technical and capitalizes in clutch moments. Payton is also dangerous, especially if she’s left one-on-one in the attacking third. If you don’t have someone who can match her speed, you’re in trouble.”

Nutzman has maintained a 4.92 weighted GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play soccer at Mercer 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](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).

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