

NIXA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MISSOURI BOYS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 25, 2025) — In its 40th year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Jackson Cantwell** of **Nixa High School** is the **2024-25 Gatorade Missouri Boys Track & Field 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 Cantwell as Missouri's best high school track & field athlete, and he joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as Alan Webb (2000-01, South Lakes High School, Va.), Kerron Clement (2002-03, Laporte High School, Texas) and Christian Miller (2023-24, Creekside High School, Fl.).

The state's returning Gatorade Boys Track & Field Player of the Year, the 6-foot-8, 300-pound junior throws specialist won the shot put and discus events at the Class 5 state meet this past season and his effort of 76 feet, 11.25 inches in the former set a state record and ranked No. 1 nationally among prep boys competitors this spring as well as No. 2 in boys prep history. No American prep boy has put the shot further since 1979. The 2024-25 Gatorade Missouri Football Player of the Year, Cantwell's state-winning discus throw of 210-5 ranked No. 6 nationally. He capped his spring by winning the shot at the USATF Under-20 Championships and Nike Outdoor Nationals to earn dual All-American status.

A regular at Nixa High School's weekly Leadership Academy, a group that discusses leadership skills, Cantwell has volunteered locally at the Least of These Food Pantry, the only full-service pantry serving Christian County. He has also donated his time as a peer tutor and youth track coach. "Jackson Cantwell emerged as arguably America's best dual-sport athlete this past school year," said Rich Gonzalez, editor for PrepCalTrack.com. "A premier gridiron recruit, he improved in the shot put by more than two feet to record the best prep throw since Jimmy Carter was the president."

Cantwell has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. He has made a verbal commitment to play football at the University of Miami 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.

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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