

CHICAGO BEARS 2023 COACH OF THE WEEK & HIGH SCHOOL ALL-STAR FINAL RECOGNITION - WEEK 9

Oct. 26 - The Chicago Bears have officially named head coach Dan Tito from Joliet West High School in Joliet, Ill., as the final recipient of the 2023 Chicago Bears High School Coach of the Week, and quarterback Cooper Kmet from St. Viator High School in Arlington Heights, Ill., as the final honoree for the 2023 Chicago Bears High School All-Star in week 9.

These recognitions are part of the Coach of the Week and High School All-Stars award programs, which are brought to you by Athletico Physical Therapy. In support of these initiatives, the Bears will make a \$2,000 donation to the Joliet West football program and direct a \$500 donation to the youth football program of Kmet's choice.



Dan Tito

On Oct. 20, head coach Dan Tito guided his team, the Joliet West Tigers (8-1), to a decisive 35-12 road conference victory against the Plainfield Central Wildcats (4-5) in their final regular-season game. This victory crowned them as the Southwest Prairie East Conference champions with an undefeated conference record of 5-0 for the first time in over 50 years, marking their most successful season since 1968. Coach Tito took the role of head coach for the Tigers' varsity program in 2022, following the resignation of former head coach Bill Lech. Prior to becoming head coach, Tito served as the defensive coordinator for a season and as the head coach for the Tigers' freshman team. Beyond the field, Coach Tito and his football program are involved in various community service initiatives. They have organized fundraising efforts within the team to collect money for breast cancer, organized free youth camps during the summer and hosted trivia events to raise funds for the Joliet Township High School Foundation. The Tigers are now preparing to take on the #24 seed St. Ignatius College Prep Wolfpack (6-3) in the first round of the Class 8A 2023 IHSA state playoffs on Friday night, Oct. 27.



Cooper Kmet

On Oct. 20, the junior quarterback Cooper Kmet played a pivotal role in leading the St. Viator Lions (5-4) to a thrilling 49-27 road conference victory against the Marmon Cadets (2-7) in their final regular-season game. The Lions had a 4-4 record entering Friday's game, which was a must-win for them to qualify for the IHSA state playoffs. Additionally, the Lions finished second place in the CCL/ESCC Purple conference, behind the conference champions Carmel Corsairs. During the game, Kmet completed 19 of 27 passes for 422 yards and threw seven touchdowns. Following their success, Kmet and the Lions are aiming to advance further in the playoffs this year, after experiencing a first-round exit last year. They are scheduled to face the #5 seed Richmond-Burton Rockets (7-2) in the first round of the Class 4A 2023 IHSA state playoffs on Friday night, Oct. 27.

About "Coach of the Week" & "High School All-Star"

The Chicago Bears Coach of the Week program was launched in 1996 and High School All-Star program in 2011. The Coach of the Week program honors outstanding Illinois high school coaches who develop players' football skills and knowledge, character, leadership, discipline and teamwork abilities. The nomination criteria for the High School All-Star program includes on-field performance, community involvement and good sportsmanship. Exceptional high school coaches and players who go beyond expectations are nominated by a panel of local high school sports journalists. The winning candidates are chosen each week from Aug. 25th to Oct. 21st. Since the program's inception, the Bears have donated more than \$369,000 to Illinois high schools in support of their football programs. For more information, please visit ChicagoBears.com/Community/High-School-Football.

