

CHICAGO BEARS ANNOUNCE HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL COACH OF THE WEEK AND ALL-STAR AWARD WINNERS - WEEK 8

The Chicago Bears have officially named Joe Ryan, head coach of Sycamore High School in Sycamore, as the Chicago Bears High School Coach of the Week and Jacob Bell, quarterback of Naperville North High School in Naperville, as the Chicago Bears High School All-Star for Week 8.

The Coach of the Week and High School All-Star awards, brought to you by Athletico Physical Therapy, recognize outstanding performances and leadership among high school coaches and players in Illinois. As part of the award programs, the Chicago Bears will make a \$2,000 donation to the Sycamore football program and a \$500 donation to the youth football program of Bell's choice.

Joe Ryan

This past Friday night, Oct. 18, Head Coach Joe Ryan led the Sycamore Spartans to a commanding 42-0 shutout victory over the Morris Redskins, extending their undefeated season to 8-0. This win came just a week after Ryan reached a significant milestone, securing his 200th career victory with a 28-13 triumph over the LaSalle-Peru Cavaliers on Oct. 11. Coach Ryan's ability to guide his team to success, whether during a dominant 14-1 season or a challenging 4-5 campaign, shows his adaptability and commitment to bringing out the best in his players. Since taking over the Sycamore football program as head coach, Ryan has built a program that emphasizes both athletic excellence and personal development. His approach to coaching goes beyond the game, with a focus on mental resilience and player safety, particularly addressing critical topics like concussions. With more than 36 years of coaching experience, Ryan has proactively advocated for improvements in equipment and tackling techniques to prioritize his players' health and well-being. In addition to his work on the field, Ryan encourages his players to actively engage in youth programs and community service projects, instilling a sense of responsibility that extends beyond football. This holistic approach has helped his athletes grow not only as players but also as role models within the Sycamore community. As a fun fact, two current NFL players, linebackers Ben Niemann of the Detroit Lions and Nick Niemann of the Los Angeles Chargers, both played for Coach Ryan in high school. The Spartans will look to continue their undefeated streak when they host the Cahokia Comanches on Friday night, Oct. 25.



Jacob Bell

This past Friday night, Oct. 18, senior quarterback Jacob Bell delivered an impressive performance, leading the Naperville North Huskies to a 63-62 double-overtime road victory against the Homewood-Flossmoor Vikings. Trailing by 15 points with under two minutes left in regulation, Bell orchestrated a dramatic comeback that pushed the game into overtime and ultimately secured the win. His outstanding efforts helped the Huskies achieve their sixth victory of the season, making them playoff eligible with a 6-2 record in the highly competitive Southwest Valley Conference. During the game, Bell completed 27 of 39 passes for 330 yards and accounted for nine total touchdowns – seven through the air and two on the ground. His performance places him in elite company, as only 10 players in IHSA history have scored nine or more touchdowns in a single game, with Bell being the first to accomplish this since 2021. Bell, a senior who has verbally committed to Ball State University, has been a key figure for the Huskies throughout the season. The team will aim to build on this momentum as they prepare to host their final regular season game against the Sandburg Eagles on Friday night, Oct. 25.



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

The Chicago Bears High School Coach of the Week program was launched in 1996 and the High School All-Star program in 2011. The High School 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 for the 2024 IHSA football season. Since the program's inception, the Chicago Bears have donated more than \$391,500 to Illinois high schools in support of their football programs. For more information, please visit ChicagoBears.com/Community/High-School-Football.

