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**KIMBERLY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WISCONSIN BOYS FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 11, 2017) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced D.J. Stewart of Kimberly High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Wisconsin Football Player of the Year. Stewart is the second Gatorade Wisconsin Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Kimberly High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Stewart as Wisconsin's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in December, Stewart joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Mitchell Trubisky (2012-13, Mentor High School, Ohio), Greg Olsen (2002-03, Wayne Hills High School, N.J.), Matthew Stafford (2005-06 Highland Park High School, Texas), Harrison Smith (2006-07 Knoxville Catholic High School, Tenn.), Latavius Murray (2007-08, Onondaga High School, N.Y.), Brock Osweiler (2008-09, Flathead High School, Mont.) and Leonard Fournette (2014-15 & 2012-13, St. Augustine High School, La.).

The 6-foot, 172-pound senior running back led the Papermakers to a 14-0 record and a fifth-straight Division I state championship this past season. Stewart rushed for 2,299 yards and 28 touchdowns as Kimberly extended the nation's longest active winning streak to 70 games. Stewart ran for 10 scores in the postseason, rumbling for 195 yards and two TDs on the ground in Kimberly's 27-7 win over Sun Prairie High in the state title game. The 2017 Wisconsin Football Coaches Association's Offensive Player of the Year, he concluded his prep football career with 4,294 rushing yards and 70 total touchdowns.

Stewart has volunteered locally with Goodwill and as a peer mentor, and he has donated his time as a youth football and track coach. "D.J. Stewart has been a dominating player for Kimberly again this year," said Brent Engen, head coach of Appleton West High. "Teams have keyed on him more this year, but D.J. continues to produce, particularly in close games. He has become a more physical runner, but still has the ability to score from anywhere on the field."

Stewart has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at North Dakota State University in the fall of 2018.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school 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 work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Stewart joins recent Gatorade Wisconsin Football Players of the Year Danny Vanden Boom (2016-17, Kimberly High School), Ben Bredeson (2015-16, Arrowhead High School), Alec Ingold (2014-15, Bay Port High School), Matt Ferris (2013-14, Xavier High School), Tarek Yaeggi (2012-13, Watertown High School), Vince Biegel (2011-12, Lincoln High School), Melvin Gordon (2010-11, Bradford High School), and Eric Oertel (2009-10, Racine Lutheran High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Stewart will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow the conversation on Twitter #GatoradePOY. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit <http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com/>.

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