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**LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® SOUTH DAKOTA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 1, 2011) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Alex Schultz of Lincoln High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade South Dakota Football Player of the Year. Schultz is the first Gatorade South Dakota Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Lincoln 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 Schultz as South Dakota's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Schultz joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Wes Welker (1999-00, Heritage Hall HS, Okla.), Terrell Suggs (1999-00, Hamilton HS, Ariz.), Anquan Boldin (1998-99, Pahokee HS, Fla.) and Jerome Bettis (1989-90, Mackenzie HS, Mich.).

The 6-foot-1, 200-pound senior quarterback passed for 2,991 yards and 36 touchdowns this past season, leading the Patriots (8-3) to the Class 11AA semifinals. Schultz completed 195 of 329 passes while throwing just eight interceptions. A two-time First Team All-State selection, Schultz finished his prep career as second in state history in total yards passing.

Schultz has maintained a 3.69 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally as a peer mentor and on behalf of an area hospital.

"Schultz is the best playmaker I've seen in a long time," said Kim Nelson, head coach of rival Roosevelt High. "He's been successful against every team, every defense and in every type of weather."

Schultz remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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 ESPNHS and the Gatorade high school sports leadership team, 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.

Schultz joins recent Gatorade South Dakota Football Players of the Year Matt Hermanson (2010-11, Washington High School) Austin Sumner (2009-10, Brandon Valley), Dustin Lotzer (2008-09, Sisseton High School) and Riley Reiff (2007-08, Parkston) among the state's list of former award winners.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. 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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com.

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