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**OSSEO SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® MINNESOTA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (November 29, 2012) — In its 28<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Bridgeport Tusler of Osseo Senior High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Minnesota Football Player of the Year. Tusler is the first Gatorade Minnesota Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Osseo Senior 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 Tusler as Minnesota's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Tusler 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 5-foot-11, 195-pound senior running back and cornerback rushed for 1,173 yards and 16 touchdowns on 104 carries this past season, leading the Orioles (6-4) to the Class 6A postseason. The 2012 Minneapolis Star Tribune Metro Offensive Player of the Year, Tusler also caught 18 passes for 243 yards and three scores. Defensively, he contributed with 35 tackles and eight interceptions for a unit that surrendered just 11.1 points per game.

Tusler has maintained a 3.54 GPA in the classroom. A devoted member of his church community, he has volunteered locally as a Sunday School Teacher and as a youth football and basketball coach in addition to donating his time to an area daycare center.

"Bridgeport Tusler is the best player we saw this year and the best I've seen in recent memory," said Jeff Ferguson, head coach at Totino Grace High, "In addition to his obvious physical talent, he is an extraordinary competitor and he plays with an effort and physicality that is very unusual. He is outstanding in three phases as a running back, a defensive back and a returner. He is incredibly versatile."

Tusler 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 the Gatorade high school sports leadership team in partnership with USA TODAY High School Sports, 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.

Tusler joins recent Gatorade Minnesota Football Players of the Year Philip Nelson (2011-12, Mankato West High School), Eric Kline (2010-11, Blaine High School), A.J. Tarpley (2009-10, Wayzata), Anders Lee (2008-09, Edina High School) and Michael Floyd (2007-08, Cretin-Derham Hall) 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com).

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