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**BERGEN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® NEW JERSEY FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (November 29, 2012) — In its 28th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Jonathan Germano of Bergen Catholic High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade New Jersey Football Player of the Year. Germano is the first Gatorade New Jersey Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Bergen Catholic 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 Germano as New Jersey's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Germano 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, 185-pound senior quarterback led the Crusaders to a 7-3 record this season entering the Group IV state semifinals, scheduled for November 30. A returning Second Team All-State selection, Germano threw for 2,828 yards and 33 touchdowns, completing 170-of-261 passes (65 percent). Germano also rushed for 387 yards and seven touchdowns on 109 carries. He will conclude his career as his school's career leader in pass completions, passing yards and passing touchdowns.

Germano has maintained an A average in the classroom. A member of his school's Red & Gold student ambassadors, cooking club and USO club, assisting men and women in uniform, he has also volunteered hundreds of hours of community service on behalf of his church and school communities, including his participation in a student leadership program, the Midnight Run charity group and youth football camps.

"Jon Germano is a natural leader and one of the best student-athletes to ever come through the halls of Bergen Catholic," said Crusaders head coach Nunzio Campanile. "He has garnered his storied school records in less than two full seasons as Bergen Catholic's quarterback. He was a converted safety and had not played the quarterback position since he was in third grade before he won the position prior to the start of the 2011 season."

Germano 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.

Germano joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Football Players of the Year Jamauri Bogan (2011-12, Union High School), Savon Huggins (2010-11, Saint Peter's Prep.), Tony Jones (2009-10, Don Bosco Preparatory School), Dillon Romain (2008-09, Don Bosco Preparatory High School) and J.B. Fitzgerald (2007-08, West Windsor-Plainsboro South) 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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