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Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)

**BISMARCK HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® NORTH DAKOTA 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 Layne Johs of Bismarck High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade North Dakota Football Player of the Year. Johs is the fifth Gatorade North Dakota Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Bismarck 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 Johs as North Dakota's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Johs 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, 210-pound senior running back led the Demons to a 12-0 record and the Class AAA state championship this past season. Johs rushed for 1,990 yards and 32 touchdowns on 206 carries. He is a two-time First Team All-State selection and the Class AAA Senior Athlete of the Year.

Johs has maintained a 3.40 GPA in the classroom. A member of his school choir, he has volunteered locally on behalf of flood relief efforts.

"Johs is a big, physical kid who can just explode and turn a routine play into a big gain," said Barry Holmen, head coach at rival Minot High. "He runs really well between the tackles, but he also has breakaway speed."

Johs 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.

Johs joins recent Gatorade North Dakota Football Players of the Year Devin Coyle (2011-12, Mandan High School), Connor McGovern (2010-11, Shanley High School), Esley Thorton (2009-10, Bismarck), Brent Qvale (2008-09, Williston High School) and Josh Horner (2007-08, Fargo 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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