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**JAMES F. BYRNES HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® SOUTH CAROLINA 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 Shuler Bentley of James F. Byrnes High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade South Carolina Football Player of the Year. Bentley is the second Gatorade South Carolina Football Player of the Year to be chosen from James F. Byrnes 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 Bentley as South Carolina's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Bentley 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, 197-pound junior quarterback passed for 4,718 yards and 59 touchdowns this past season, leading the Rebels (12-2) to the Class 4A-I semifinals. The 2012 Greer Citizen Player of the Year, Bentley broke the state record for single-season touchdown passes, eclipsing the mark of 54 set by two-time Gatorade South Carolina Football Player of the Year Wily Korn. He completed 299-of-462 passes (65 percent) while throwing 13 interceptions in 2012.

Bentley has maintained an A average in the classroom. A devoted member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, he has volunteered locally in association with his church youth group and as an elementary school guest speaker.

"Shuler Bentley is an exceptional athlete," said Steve Eoute, head coach at Riverside High. "As a football coach, it is a joy to watch someone who has such command and understanding of the game. I was very impressed with his presence in the pocket. He reads defensive coverages well and has a strong arm."

Bentley will begin his senior year of high school next fall.

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.

Bentley joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Football Players of the Year Quinshad Davis (2011-12, Gaffney High School), Justin Worley (2010-11, Northwestern High School), Marcus Lattimore (2009-10, 2008-09, Byrnes), and Daquan Bowers (2007-08, Bamberg-Ehrhardt) 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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