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**WHITEHAVEN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® TENNESSEE 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 Mark Dodson of Whitehaven High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Tennessee Football Player of the Year. Dodson is the second Gatorade Tennessee Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Whitehaven 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 Dodson as Tennessee's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Dodson 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-10, 190-pound senior running back has led the Tigers to a 14-0 record and the Class 6A state final against Maryville, scheduled for Dec. 1. Dodson rushed for 2,977 yards and 32 touchdowns on 284 carries through 14 games, 91 yards shy of the state single-season record. A two-time All-State selection, he was a finalist for Tennessee's Mr. Football Class AAA Back award.

Dodson has maintained a 3.11 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of youth football programs, and has raised funds on behalf of the U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots Foundation as well as breast cancer awareness efforts.

"Dodson is shifty, he's got great feet and he's very fast," said Marcus Wimberly, head coach at Memphis East High. "You have to be disciplined, because he makes a lot of people miss. Whitehaven has a massive offensive line, but a lot of those yards are just him."

Dodson has verbally committed to play football on an athletic scholarship at the University of Mississippi beginning in the fall of 2013.

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.

Dodson joins recent Gatorade Tennessee Football Players of the Year Patton Robinette (2011-12, Maryville High School), I'Tavius Mathers (2010-11, Blackman High School), JaRon Toney (2009-10, Alcoa), Marsalis Teague (2008-09, Henry County High School) and Curt Phillips (2007-08, Sullivan 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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