JORDAN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® UTAH 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 Austin Kafentzis of Jordan High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Utah Football Player of the Year. Kafentzis is the second Gatorade Utah Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Jordan 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 Kafentzis as Utah's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Kafentzis 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, 192-pound sophomore quarterback led the Beetdiggers (12-1) to the Class 5A state championship this season. The 2011 MaxPreps National Freshman of the Year, Kafentzis completed 200-of-313 passes (61 percent) for 3,018 yards and 32 touchdowns. A returning Class 5A First Team All-State selection as named by The Salt Lake Tribune and Deseret News, he also rushed for 1,884 yards and 26 touchdowns on 237 carries. In four Class 5A state playoff games, Kafentzis completed 42-of-54 attempts for 749 yards and six touchdowns in addition to rushing for 389 yards and seven scores on 56 carries. His eight touchdown passes against Copper Hills High on Sept. 21 tied the state single-game record.

Also a track and field standout, Kafentzis has maintained a 3.85 GPA in the classroom. In addition to donating his time as a youth football and javelin instructor, he has volunteered locally on behalf of his church, as a peer tutor and as a mentor for elementary school children.

"His desire to win is unmatched," said Jordan head coach Eric Kjar. "Austin has never missed a workout, practice or game. He is not a selfish person. He puts the team—and especially the linemen—ahead of himself. He is very calm under pressure. His first game that he ever started on varsity was against the No. 1 team in the state, and he lead a fourth-quarter comeback, driving the team 70 yards in 45 seconds for a touchdown and leaving just five seconds on the clock."

Kafentzis will begin his junior 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.

Kafentzis joins recent Gatorade Utah Football Players of the Year Chase Hansen (2011-12, Lone Peak High School), Alex Kuresa (2010-11, Mountain Crest High School), Harvey Langi (2009-10, Bingham), Ammon Olsen (2008-09, Alta High School) and Justin Sorensen (2007-08, Bingham) 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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