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**LONE PEAK HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® UTAH VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 12, 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 McKenzie Willey of Lone Peak High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Utah Volleyball Player of the Year. Willey is the first Gatorade Utah Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Lone Peak 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 Willey as Utah's best high school volleyball player. Willey joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including USA Volleyball players Kim Glass (2001-02, Horseshoe HS, Penn.), Kim Willoughby (1998-99, 1999-00, Assumption HS, La.) and Ogonna Nnamani (1999-00, University HS, Ill).

The 6-foot-1 senior outside hitter recorded 303 kills, 224 digs, 38 blocks and 30 service aces this past season, leading the Knights (24-6) to the Class 5A state final. A 2012-13 Under Armour First Team All-American, Willey was named Class 5A MVP by the Salt Lake Tribune and also helped the 2012 U.S. Women's Junior National Team win a bronze medal at the 2012 NORCECA Women's Junior (U-20) Continental Championship in Managua, Nicaragua.

Willey has maintained a 3.98 GPA in the classroom. A peer tutor in her school, she has volunteered locally on behalf of a homeless shelter, the Special Olympics and the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life.

"She's just a fantastic player," said Scott Keister, head coach at Riverton High. "She has the ability to see the court in the air, which makes her difficult to stop. She has tremendous vision and she's a great leader for that team."

Willey has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at Arizona State University beginning in the fall of 2013. She will graduate early to begin attending classes on the Tempe campus during the upcoming spring semester.

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.

Willey joins recent Gatorade Utah Volleyball Players of the Year Ciara Parker (2011-12, Snow Canyon High School), Ashley Garfield (2010-11, Morgan High School), Danica Mendivil (2009-10, Pleasant Grove), Brooke McAlister (2008-09, Pleasant Grove) and Chelsey Garfield (2007-08, Morgan) 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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