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**MINNEAPOLIS SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MINNESOTA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 19, 2013) — 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 Elliot Cassutt of Minneapolis South High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Minnesota Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Cassutt is the first Gatorade Minnesota Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Minneapolis South 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 Cassutt as Minnesota's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Cassutt joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, East Brunswick HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-11, 180-pound senior forward scored 27 goals and passed for 17 assists this past season, leading the Tigers to the Class 2A state quarterfinals. An All-American selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America, Cassutt was also named Class 2A Mr. Soccer and the Pioneer Press Player of the Year. He concluded his prep career with 97 goals and 68 assists, a state record for total points.

Cassutt has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of a literacy-outreach initiative and youth soccer programs.

"Cassutt is a really dangerous striker," said Jamie Plaisance, head coach at Minneapolis Southwest High. "He's deadly when he gets the ball on his feet in the box, and he can finish equally well with either foot."

Cassutt will attend Amherst College this fall, where he will play soccer.

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.

Cassutt joins recent Gatorade Minnesota Boys Soccer Players of the Year Matthew Gweh (2011-12, Eastview High School), Eric Miller (2010-11, Woodbury High School), Paul Yonga, (2009-10 & 2008-09, Totino-Grace High School), Keidoe Pour (2007-08, Saint Bernard's School), and Abe Gibbons (2006-2007, 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 www.gatorade.com/poy.

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