

**Contact: Adam Woullard (312-729-3627)**

**CARDINAL GIBBONS HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE NORTH CAROLINA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 19, 2013) — In its 28<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Ade Taiwo of Cardinal Gibbons High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade North Carolina Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Taiwo is the first Gatorade North Carolina Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Cardinal Gibbons 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 Taiwo as North Carolina'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, Taiwo 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 6-foot-1, 180-pound junior forward scored 12 goals and passed for 11 assists this past season, leading the Crusaders (18-5-3) to the Class 3A state semifinals. The 2012 North Carolina Soccer Coaches Association State Player of the Year, Taiwo was an All-American selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America and the Raleigh News & Observer All-Metro Player of the Year. He concluded his junior year with 47 goals and 25 assists in his prep soccer career.

Taiwo has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach and referee.

"Ade is a great player that can play multiple positions and take over a game," said Travis Seese, head coach of Athens Drive High. "He is bigger and faster than most everyone on the field and he has the skills to go along with his athletic ability."

Taiwo has verbally committed to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at N.C. State University beginning in the fall of 2014.

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.

Taiwo joins recent Gatorade North Carolina Boys Soccer Players of the Year Jonathan Campbell (2011-12, Greensboro Day School), Cooper Vandermaas-Peeler (2010-11, Athens Drive High School), Teddy Mullin, (2009-10, Jordan High School), Ben Newnam (2008-09 East Forsyth), Watt Williams (2007-08, Broughton), and Clint Irwin (2006-2007, Charlotte Christian School) 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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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