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**MARION COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® KENTUCKY GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 14, 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 Makayla Epps of Marion County High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Kentucky Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Epps is the first Gatorade Kentucky Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Marion County 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 court, distinguishes Epps as Kentucky's best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award announced in March, Epps joins an elite alumni association of past state girls basketball award-winners, including Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Diana Taurasi (1998-99 & 1999-00, Don Antonio Lugo HS, Calif.), Maya Moore (2005-06 Collins Hill HS, Ga.), Rashanda McCants (2004-05, Asheville HS, N.C.), Shyra Ely (1999-00, Ben Davis HS, Ind.) and Lisa Leslie (1988-89, Morningside HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-10 senior point guard has led the Rebels to a 35-0 record entering the Sweet Sixteen State Tournament round of the postseason against Bowling Green High, scheduled for March 13. At the time of her selection, Epps was averaging 22.8 points, 4.8 assists, 4.3 steals and 4.2 rebounds per game. A McDonald's All-American Game selection and a three-time All-State honoree, she has scored 3,256 points in her prep basketball career, placing her eighth on Kentucky's career list.

Epps has maintained a B average in the classroom. She has volunteered locally with American Red Cross blood-donation drives, a literacy-outreach program and as a peer tutor.

"Makayla's basketball IQ is as good as anyone that I have ever been around in the game of basketball," said Trent Milby, head coach of Marion County High. "Her ability to score as well as control a game from the point guard position all by herself is remarkable."

Epps has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on an athletic scholarship at the University of Kentucky beginning this 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.

Epps joins recent Gatorade Kentucky Girls Basketball Players of the Year Sydney Moss (2011-12, Boone County High School), Sara Hammond (2010-11, Rockcastle County High School), Sarah Beth Barnette (2009-10, Lexington Christian Academy), A'dia Mathies (2008-09, Iroquois), Tia Gibbs (2007-08, Butler Traditional), and Rebecca Gray (2006-07, Scott County) 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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