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**SOUTH SIDE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE ARKANSAS BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 14, 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 Wes Carson of South Side High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Arkansas Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Carson is the first Gatorade Arkansas Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from South Side 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 Carson as Arkansas'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, Carson 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-7, 135-pound senior forward scored 35 goals and passed for 10 assists this past season, leading the Rebels to a 10-9-2 record. Carson missed FS-Southside's first four games of the season on a trip to Costa Rica with the U.S. Youth Soccer Region III Olympic Development Program team. The 2012 Class 7A West Conference Offensive Player of the Year, Carson concluded his prep soccer career with 77 goals.

Carson has maintained a 3.64 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics and as part of multiple community service initiatives in association with his church youth group.

"Wes Carson can turn a game on its head in a flash and truly has game-changing talent," said DJ Beeler, head coach of Springdale High. "He is extremely important to his team's success."

Carson has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at the University of Central Arkansas 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.

Carson joins recent Gatorade Arkansas Boys Soccer Players of the Year Nelson Landaverde (2011-12, Springdale High School), William Hidalgo (2010-11, Cabot High School), John Lung'aho (2009-10, Parkview Arts/Science Magnet), Taylor Hart (2008-09, Conway High School), Stephen Maxwell (2007-08, Conway), and Jeff Chacko (2006-07, Catholic High School for Boys) 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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