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**GAINESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® GEORGIA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 5, 2013) — In its 29th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Deshaun Watson of Gainesville High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Georgia Football Player of the Year. Watson is the first Gatorade Georgia Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Gainesville 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 Watson as Georgia's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Watson joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Wes Welker (1999-00, Heritage Hall HS, Okla.), Terrell Suggs (1999-00, Hamilton HS, Ariz.), Anquan Boldin (1998-99, Pahokee HS, Fla.) and Jerome Bettis (1989-90, Mackenzie HS, Mich.).

A 6-foot-3, 200-pound senior quarterback, Watson has led the Red Elephants to a 12-1 record entering the Class AAAAA state semifinals, scheduled for Dec. 6. An Under Armour All-America Game selection, Watson threw for 3,517 yards and 46 touchdowns on 259-of-374 passing (69.3 percent) entering the postseason final four. Also a returning Class AAAAA First Team All-State selection, Watson rushed for 1,016 yards and 13 touchdowns on 124 carries through 13 games. He eclipsed state records for career passing yards and touchdowns during his junior season.

Also a basketball standout, Watson has maintained a 3.48 GPA in the classroom. In addition to serving as an intern for the Hall County Board of Commissioners, he has helped raise awareness for victims of cancer and cerebral palsy.

"Athletically, he is the best I have ever seen," said Shane Davis, head coach at rival Apalachee High. "I've been coaching high school football for 20 years. I have had the opportunity to coach some great players. The best is probably Tony Taylor, who played linebacker for the Atlanta Falcons for a while. I have also seen some great players play. I had the opportunity to see Takeo Spikes play while he was at Washington County. I thought that he was the best high school football player that I had ever seen. That was until Deshaun Watson."

Watson has verbally committed to play football on an athletic scholarship at Clemson 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.

Watson joins recent Gatorade Georgia Football Players of the Year Taylor Lamb (2012-2013, Calhoun High School), Kenyan Drake (2011-12, Hillgrove HS), Brian Randolph (2010-11, Kell High School), Hutson Mason (2009-10, Lassiter), Branden Smith (2008-09, Booker T. Washington High School) and Tavarres King (2007-08, Habersham Central) 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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