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**FREE STATE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® KANSAS 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 Joe Dineen of Free State High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Kansas Football Player of the Year. Dineen is the first Gatorade Kansas Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Free State 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 Dineen as Kansas's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Dineen 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.).

The 6-foot-2, 195-pound senior quarterback and free safety passed for 1,568 yards and 18 touchdowns, completing 111-of-207 attempts, leading the Firebirds (9-2) to the Class 6A state quarterfinals this past season. He also rushed for 726 yards and 10 touchdowns on 122 carries. The Sunflower League Player of the Year, Dineen recorded 73 tackles, five for a loss, recovered two fumbles and collected one interception on defense.

Dineen has maintained a 3.38 GPA in the classroom. A donations bell-ringer for the Salvation Army, he has volunteered locally as a mentor to children with special needs and as a youth football referee. He's also donated his time to the Special Olympics.

"I thought Joe Dineen was an all-around great player," said Tim Callaghan, head coach of Shawnee Mission West High. "He was the reason they were as good as they were. He anchored the offense and the defense."

Dineen has verbally committed to play football on an athletic scholarship at the University of Kansas 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.

Dineen joins recent Gatorade Kansas Football Players of the Year Tanner Wood (2012-2013, Conway Springs High School), Montell Cozart (2011-12, Bishop Miege High School), Bubba Starling (2010-11, Gardner Edgerton High School), Blake Bell (2009-10 & 2008-09, Bishop Carroll Catholic) and Bryce Brown (2007-08, East) 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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