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**FARGO SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® NORTH DAKOTA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 5, 2013) — In its 29<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 James Johannesson of Fargo South High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade North Dakota Football Player of the Year. Johannesson is the third Gatorade North Dakota Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Fargo South 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 Johannesson as North Dakota's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Johannesson 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, 210-pound junior running back led the Bruins to a 9-3 record and the Class AAA state championship this past season. Johannesson rushed for 2,671 yards and 29 touchdowns on 266 carries. A First Team All-State selection, he ran for 236 yards and three touchdowns in the state title game against Bismarck. He owns the school records for rushing yards in a game, season and career.

Johannesson has maintained a 3.43 GPA in the classroom. Also a hockey and track standout, he has volunteered locally visiting nursing homes and assisting with youth hockey and football programs.

"Johannesson is big, he has great vision and he's patient," said Jay Gibson, head coach at West Fargo High. "He can run away from you or run you over. He has the whole package."

Johannesson will begin his senior year of high school next 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.

Johannesson joins recent Gatorade North Dakota Football Players of the Year Layne Johs (2012-2013, Bismarck High School), Devin Coyle (2011-12, Mandan High School), Connor McGovern (2010-11, Shanley High School), Esley Thorton (2009-10, Bismarck), Brent Qvale (2008-09, Williston High School) and Josh Horner (2007-08, Fargo South) 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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