

**Contact: Matt Schiffman (312-729-3672)**

**ATHENS HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® OHIO 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 Joe Burrow of Athens High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Ohio Football Player of the Year. Burrow is the first Gatorade Ohio Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Athens 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 Burrow as Ohio's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Burrow 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-4, 190-pound junior quarterback passed for 3,374 yards and 46 touchdowns, completing 190-of-257 passes while throwing just five interceptions this past season, leading the Bulldogs (12-1) to the Division III quarterfinals. The 2012 and 2013 Southeast District Player of the Year, Burrow also rushed for 585 yards on 96 carries, scoring nine touchdowns. His 93 career passing touchdowns current ranks seventh in state history.

Burrow has maintained a 3.71 GPA in the classroom. A member of his school's Key Club, he has volunteered locally as a youth football referee and camp counselor.

"Joey Burrow is an outstanding athlete who has performed well in every game no matter the situation," said Justy Burleson, head coach at Vinton County High. "When he has to make the big-time throw, he gets it done. If the defense takes the pass away, he is a team player who puts his running backs in position to be successful. Physically he has the tools to play at the next level and he also possesses the intellectual capabilities as well."

Burrow 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.

Burrow joins recent Gatorade Ohio Football Players of the Year Mitch Trubisky (2012-2013, Mentor High School), Maty Mauk (2011-12 & 2010-11, Kenton High School), Jordan Hicks (2009-10, Lakota West), Storm Klein (2008-09, Licking Valley High School) and Dan McCarthy (2007-08, Cardinal Mooney) 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).

###