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**THE WOODLANDS HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® TEXAS VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 12, 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 Courtney Eckenrode of The Woodlands High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Texas Volleyball Player of the Year. Eckenrode is the first Gatorade Texas Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from The Woodlands 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 Eckenrode as Texas's best high school volleyball player. Eckenrode joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including USA Volleyball players Kim Glass (2001-02, Horseshoe HS, Penn.), Kim Willoughby (1998-99, 1999-00, Assumption HS, La.) and Ogonna Nnamani (1999-00, University HS, Ill).

The 5-foot-9 senior setter led the Highlanders to a 45-0 record, the Class 5A state title and a No. 2 national ranking by PrepVolleyball.com this past season. Eckenrode recorded 1,189 assists, 386 digs, 86 kills, 49 blocks and 35 service aces. A 2013-14 Under Armour Second Team All-American, she was MVP of the Class 5A state tournament, a First Team All-State selection and a member of the LoneStarVolleyball.com All-Texas First Team.

Eckenrode has maintained a 3.80 GPA in the classroom. A devoted member of her church community, she has volunteered locally on behalf of a women's shelter and youth volleyball programs.

"Eckenrode is one of the best setters to come out of Texas in quite a while," said John Turner, head coach at Pearland High. "She has a tremendous ability to read the defense, and she has incredible composure—she never gets shaken."

Eckenrode has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on an athletic scholarship at San Diego State 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.

Eckenrode joins recent Gatorade Texas Volleyball Players of the Year Chiaka Ogbogu (2012-2013, Coppell High School), Amy Neal (2011-12, Lake Travis High School), Tiffany Baker (2010-11, Hebron High School), Sara Shaw (2009-10, Westlake), Torri Campbell (2008-09, Amarillo High School) and Brianne Barker (2007-08, Amarillo) 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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