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**CONRAD HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE CONNECTICUT BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 13, 2014) — 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 Matheus Souza of Conrad High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Connecticut Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Souza is the first Gatorade Connecticut Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Conrad 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 Souza as Connecticut's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Souza joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, East Brunswick HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-10, 165-pound senior forward scored 24 goals and passed for 10 assists this past season, leading the Chieftains (13-5-2) to the Class LL state tournament quarterfinals. The Connecticut Junior Soccer Association Male High School Player of the Year, Souza was a three-time Hartford Courant First Team All-Area honoree and an All-American selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America. He concluded his prep soccer career with 59 goals and 26 assists.

Souza has maintained a B average in the classroom. A native of Brazil who did not speak English when he came to Conard as a freshman, he has volunteered locally with Lead By Example, a teen-led campaign to promote healthy decision-making. He has also donated his time as a lifeguard and as a child-care provider at his church.

"Matheus Souza is always a marked man and still manages to take over games," said Matt Denecour, head coach of New Britain High. "He scores at will and moves on and off the ball well. He combines speed, strength and especially skill and essentially carried his team offensively."

Souza has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at the University of Connecticut this 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.

Souza joins recent Gatorade Connecticut Boys Soccer Players of the Year Isaac Normesinu (2012-13, Hotchkiss School), Zach Zurita (2011-12, Bunnell High School), Kevin Michalak (2010-11, Farmington High School), Kofi Agyapong, (2009-10, St. Luke's School), Colin Bradley (2008-09, Avon Old Farms School), Pat Boucher (2007-08, Cromwell), and Ryan Kinne (2006-2007, Naugatuck) 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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