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Contact: Jason Belenke (312-729-3631)

**NORTH HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MINNESOTA 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 Justin Oliver of North High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Minnesota Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Oliver is the first Gatorade Minnesota Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from North 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 Oliver as Minnesota'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, Oliver 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-9, 155-pound senior forward scored 39 goals and passed for 18 assists this past season, leading the Polars (21-1) to the Class 2A state championship. An All-American selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America, Oliver was also named Class 2A Mr. Soccer and the Pioneer Press co-Player of the Year.

Oliver has maintained a 3.45 GPA in the classroom. Also a hockey standout, he helped establish a soccer program in the local elementary school system and has volunteered on behalf of the Special Olympics.

"Oliver does a great job of finding the holes and knowing where to exploit a team," said Scott Gustafson, head coach at Eastview High. "He's the kind of player you love to have on your team and hate to play against. He was the most influential player on the field."

Oliver has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Eastern Illinois University 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.

Oliver joins recent Gatorade Minnesota Boys Soccer Players of the Year Elliot Cassutt (2012-13, Minneapolis South High School), Matthew Gweh (2011-12, Eastview High School), Eric Miller (2010-11, Woodbury High School), Paul Yonga, (2009-10 & 2008-09, Totino-Grace High School), Keidoe Pour (2007-08, Saint Bernard's School), and Abe Gibbons (2006-2007, 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.

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