

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)

**BENTONVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE ARKANSAS GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 20, 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 McKenzie Dixon of Bentonville High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Arkansas Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Dixon is the fourth Gatorade Arkansas Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Bentonville 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 Dixon as Arkansas's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Dixon 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-7 junior forward has led the Tigers to a 13-4-1 record and a berth in the Class 7A State Tournament championship game against Bryant High, scheduled for May 23. Dixon scored 35 goals and passed for seven assists through 16 games, missing two contests because of minor injuries. A two-time Class 7A First Team All-State selection, Dixon is a member of the U.S. Youth Soccer Region III Olympic Development player pool. Entering the state final, she had scored 64 goals in her prep soccer career.

Dixon has maintained a weighted 4.06 GPA in the classroom. A two-time state track and field champion in the triple jump, she has volunteered locally in the pediatric ward at Mercy Hospital Northwest Arkansas. She has also donated her time at a food bank and homeless shelter and has participated in multiple community-service initiatives in association with her church youth group.

"McKenzie Dixon is such a great finisher and hard to contain with that speed of hers," said Jeff Barker, head coach of Rogers High. "She is also a very intelligent player. She is a player you build your team around."

Dixon has verbally committed to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at Austin Peay University in Clarksville, Tenn., beginning in the fall of 2015.

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.

Dixon joins recent Gatorade Arkansas Girls Soccer Players of the Year Tayler Estrada (2012-13, 2011-12 & 2010 - 11, Bentonville High School), Anne Mitchell (2009-10, Fayetteville), April Miller (2008-09, Bentonville), Mary Pat Hardin (2007-08, Mount St. Mary Academy), and Alyvia Rogers (2006-2007, Rogers) 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.

###