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**MADISON ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® ALABAMA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 4, 2014) — In its 30th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Kerryon Johnson of Madison Academy as its 2014-15 Gatorade Alabama Football Player of the Year. Johnson is the first Gatorade Alabama Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Madison Academy.

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 Johnson as Alabama's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Johnson 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-1, 200-pound senior running back and defensive back has led the Mustangs to a 13-1 record and a berth in the Class 3A state championship game against Dale County High, scheduled for Dec. 4. At the time of his selection, Johnson had rushed for 1,477 yards and 21 touchdowns on 102 carries, averaging 14.5 yards per rush. He also hauled in 24 passes for 532 yards and seven scores through 14 games. On defense, the 2014 Under Armour All-American selection had recorded five interceptions, returning two for touchdowns along with 62 tackles and four sacks. He also blocked four punts, returning one for a score.

Johnson has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally at the Ronald McDonald House, as a middle school mentor and as a youth basketball coach in addition to donating his time to multiple community service initiatives through his church youth group.

"Kerryon Johnson is as good as advertised," said Dale Jeffreys, head coach of Colbert County High. "He is the best player I have ever coached against in 28 years. He is extremely strong, he's a first-step full-speed guy and he can shake you down at the same time. He can put the team on his back and they don't lose."

Johnson has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at Auburn University 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.

Johnson joins recent Gatorade Alabama Football Players of the Year Racean 'Roc' Thomas (2013-14, Oxford High School), Nick Mullens (2012-13, Spain Park High School), Jameis Winston (2011-12, Hueytown High School), Jamal Golden (2010-11, Wetumpka High School), Coty Blanchard (2009-10, Cherokee County), Clint Moseley (2008-09, Leroy High School) and Julio Jones (2007-08, Foley) 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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