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**MANKATO WEST HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MINNESOTA 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 Ryan Schlichte of Mankato West High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Minnesota Football Player of the Year. Schlichte is the second Gatorade Minnesota Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Mankato West 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 Schlichte as Minnesota's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Schlichte 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, 210-pound senior quarterback led the Scarlets to a 12-1 record and the Class 5A state championship this past season. Schlichte passed for 3,141 yards and 45 touchdowns, completing 192-of-303 passes (63 percent) while throwing just two interceptions. He also rushed for 719 yards on 150 carries and 18 touchdowns. The 2014 Minnesota Association Press Player of the Year, he threw for 192 yards on 17-of-25 passing with a pair of touchdowns in a 42-19 win over Simley in the Class 5A state championship game.

Schlichte has maintained a 3.82 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society, he has volunteered locally at a food pantry, as a peer tutor and a youth football coach.

"Ryan Schlichte is a physically gifted player and he performed at a very high level this season," said Bubba Sullivan, head coach at Northfield High. "He had an incredible year statistically as a quarterback. We had a talented team this year and we only lost two games, both times to his team. The difference between our two teams was Ryan Schlichte."

Schlichte has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at Minnesota State University Mankato 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.

Schlichte joins recent Gatorade Minnesota Football Players of the Year Jacques Perra (2013-14, Roseville Area High School), Bridgeport Tusler (2012-13, Osseo Senior High School), Philip Nelson (2011-12, Mankato West High School), Eric Kline (2010-11, Blaine High School), A.J. Tarpley (2009-10, Wayzata), Anders Lee (2008-09, Edina High School) and Michael Floyd (2007-08, Cretin-Derham Hall) 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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