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**SOUTH PANOLA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® MISSISSIPPI FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 4, 2014) — In its 30<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Darrell Henderson of South Panola High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Mississippi Football Player of the Year. Henderson is the third Gatorade Mississippi Football Player of the Year to be chosen from South Panola 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 Henderson as Mississippi's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Henderson 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 5-foot-9, 190-pound senior running back has led the Tigers to a 14-0 record and a berth in the Class 6A state championship game against Oak Grove High, scheduled for Dec. 6. At the time of his selection, Henderson had rushed for 2,057 yards and 28 touchdowns on 269 carries. A preseason Clarion Ledger Dandy Dozen selection, he ran for 214 yards and two scores in the 2012 Class 6A state title game. Entering his week's title game, his career production stood at 5,605 rushing yards and 64 touchdowns.

Henderson has maintained a B average in the classroom and represents one of the state's top academic candidates in meeting the Gatorade award's broad criteria. He has volunteered locally at a nursing home, as part of an area beautification project and on behalf of a literacy-outreach program.

"Darrell Henderson is the key to the South Panola offense, and he seems to play his best in the biggest games and at the biggest times," said Roger Burton, assistant coach of West Point High. "He is super-fast and elusive and has great size—a perfect South Panola Tiger tailback."

Henderson remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

Henderson joins recent Gatorade Mississippi Football Players of the Year Devin Voorhies (2013-14, Wilkinson County High School), Ashton Shumpert (2012-13, Itawamba Agricultural High School), Anthony Alford (2011-12 & 2010-11, Petal High School), Dylan Favre (2009-10, St. Stanislaus College), Tyler Russell (2008-09, Meridian High School) and Charles Mitchell (2007-08, Clarksdale) 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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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