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**ATHENS HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® OHIO 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 Joe Burrow of Athens High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Ohio Football Player of the Year. Burrow is the first Gatorade Ohio Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Athens 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 Burrow as Ohio's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Burrow 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-4, 210-pound senior quarterback has led the Bulldogs to a 14-0 record and a berth in the Division III state championship game against Central Catholic, scheduled for Dec. 4. At the time of his selection, Burrow had passed for 3,993 yards and 57 touchdowns, completing 224-of-301 attempts (74 percent) with just one interception. The state's returning Gatorade Ohio Football Player of the Year, Burrow also rushed for 583 yards on 99 carries with five touchdowns through 14 games. His 151 career touchdown passes rank third in state history according to the Ohio High School Athletic Association.

Burrow has maintained a 3.77 GPA in the classroom. A member of his school's Key Club, he has volunteered locally on behalf of a food bank in addition to serving as a youth football referee and basketball camp counselor.

"Joe Burrow is a poised individual on and off the field," said Justy Burtleson, head coach at Vinson County High. "He possesses the physical and mental traits necessary to excel at not only the high school but collegiate level. He is a threat with either his passing or running ability, but it's his ability to go through his progressions in the passing game that separate him from other high school quarterbacks."

Burrow has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at The Ohio State University 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.

Two-time winner Burrow joins Gatorade Ohio Football Players of the Year Mitch Trubisky (2012-13, Mentor High School), Maty Mauk (2011-12 & 2010-11, Kenton High School), Jordan Hicks (2009-10, Lakota West), Storm Klein (2008-09, Licking Valley High School) and Dan McCarthy (2007-08, Cardinal Mooney) 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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