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**MARYSVILLE-PILCHUCK HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® WASHINGTON 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 Austin Joyner of Marysville-Pilchuck High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Washington Football Player of the Year. Joyner is the first Gatorade Washington Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Marysville-Pilchuck 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 Joyner as Washington's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Joyner 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-11, 185-pound senior running back rushed for 1,768 yards and 32 touchdowns on 133 carries this past season, leading the Tomahawks (11-2) to the Class 3A semifinals. A three-time First Team All-State selection, Joyner averaged 13.3 yards per carry and needed only 4.2 touches for every touchdown he scored this season.

Joyner has maintained a 3.16 GPA in the classroom. A devoted member of his church community, he has volunteered locally as a youth football camp counselor.

"Austin Joyner is a great competitor," said Dave Telford, head coach at Stanwood High. "It's hard to root against him, even though as an opponent you don't want him to have success. He displays great sportsmanship both on and off the field. He plays full speed on every play. Off the field, he is a polite, humble person."

Joyner has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at Washington 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.

Joyner joins recent Gatorade Washington Football Players of the Year Reilly Hennessey (2013-14, Camas High School), Max Browne (2012-13 & 2011-12, Skyline High School), Kasen Williams (2010-11, Skyline High School), Jake Heaps (2009-10 & 2008-09, Skyline) and Tony Heard (2007-08, Edmonds-Woodway) 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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