

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jason Belenke (312-729-3631)

**OVIEDO HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® FLORIDA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 11, 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 Courtney Furlong of Oviedo High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Florida Volleyball Player of the Year. Furlong is the first Gatorade Florida Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Oviedo 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 Furlong as Florida's best high school volleyball player. Furlong joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including USA Volleyball players Kim Glass (2001-02, Horseshoe HS, Penn.), Kim Willoughby (1998-99, 1999-00, Assumption HS, La.) and Ogonna Nnamani (1999-00, University HS, Ill).

The 6-foot-3 senior outside hitter slammed 487 kills while recording a .450 kill percentage and .325 hitting percentage this past season, leading the Lions (20-9) to the Class 7A regional semifinals. The two-time Class 7A Player of the Year as named by the Florida Dairy Farmers, Furlong collected 592 service receptions, 361 digs, 37 blocks and 32 service aces. She also led Orlando Volleyball Academy to an 11th-place finish in the 18 Open division of the 2014 USA Volleyball Girls' Junior National Championships.

Furlong has maintained a 4.16 weighted GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society, she has also donated her time as a youth volleyball instructor.

"Courtney Furlong is one of the best athletes to ever come out of Oviedo High School," said Lions head coach Jen Darty. "What she has brought to our program and the legacy that she is leaving behind is like no other. On the volleyball court, Courtney's presence is felt by all."

Furlong has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at the University of South Carolina 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.

Furlong joins recent Gatorade Florida Volleyball Players of the Year Christina Ambrose (2013-14, Winter Park High School), Lindsey Owens (2012-13, Bishop Moore High School), Jordan Burgess (2011-12 & 2010-11, Berkeley Preparatory School), Maddie Martin (2009-10, H.B. Plant), Jessica Yingling (2008-09, Timber Creek) and Kellie Catanach (2007-08, HB Plant) 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.

###