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**NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE NEW JERSEY BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 12, 2015) — 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 Brian Hawkins of Notre Dame High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade New Jersey Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Hawkins is the first Gatorade New Jersey Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Notre Dame 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 Hawkins as New Jersey's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Hawkins joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, East Brunswick HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-11 senior forward scored 35 goals and passed for 11 assists this past season, leading the Irish (17-5-1) to the Non-Public A state championship game. Hawkins scored four goals in each of the Non-Public, South Jersey A Regional postseason rounds: the quarterfinals, the semifinals and the title game. The NJ.com Player of the Year, Hawkins was an All-American selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America and participated in the High School All-American Game in North Carolina in December. He concluded his prep soccer career with 76 goals and 35 assists.

Hawkins has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally as part of cleanup relief from Hurricane Sandy and as a youth soccer coach.

"Brian Hawkins not only can score, pass and dribble, he can literally put an entire team on his back and will them to victory," said Bryan Fisher, head coach of West Windsor Plainsboro South High. "What he did in the state playoffs this year was extraordinary."

Hawkins has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at Rutgers University beginning this fall.

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.

Hawkins joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Boys Soccer Players of the Year James Murphy (2013-14, Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School), Brian Costa (2012-13, Pingry School), Christiano Francois (2011-12, St. Benedict's Prep.), Dan Metzger (2010-11, Holmdel High School), Jon Aguirre, (2009-10, Madison High School), Rafael Diaz (2008-09, Morris Hills), Matt Kassel (2007-08, Bridgewater-Raritan), and Brayan Martinez (2006-07, West Orange) 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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