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**UPPER ST. CLAIR HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE PENNSYLVANIA 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 Robbie Mertz of Upper St. Clair High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Mertz is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Upper St. Clair 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 Mertz as Pennsylvania'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, Mertz 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-6, 140-pound senior midfielder scored 13 goals and passed for 26 assists this past season, leading the Panthers (19-2-1) to the Class AAA state tournament. An All-American selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America, Mertz is a two-time First Team All-State honoree and the 2014 Pittsburgh Post-Gazette South Player of the Year. He concluded his prep soccer career with 26 goals and 67 assists.

Mertz has maintained a 4.69 weighted GPA in the classroom. A National Merit Commended Scholar, he has volunteered locally as a peer tutor and has donated his time to multiple fundraising campaigns to benefit the Light of Life Mission in Pittsburgh.

"Robbie Mertz has been an impact player since his freshman year," said John Arnold, head coach of Moon Area High. "He is truly one of the best players to come out this area in the past couple of years. Robbie is the machine that makes whatever team he plays on go."

Mertz has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at the University of Michigan 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.

Mertz joins recent Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Soccer Players of the Year Colten Habecker (2013-14, The Hill School), Brett Campbell (2012-13 & 2011-12, The Haverford School), Zach Batteer (2010-11, Mt. Lebanon High School), Joseph Schmid, (2009-10, Wyoming Valley West High School), Andrew Wenger (2008-09, Warwick), Shane Pruitt (2007-08, Peters Township), and Bobby Warshaw (2006-07, Mechanicsburg) 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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