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**J.L. MANN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE SOUTH CAROLINA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 11, 2015) — 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 Michele Bottari of J.L. Mann as its 2014-15 Gatorade South Carolina Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Bottari is the second Gatorade South Carolina Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from J.L. Mann.

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 Bottari as South Carolina'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, Bottari 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-10, 180-pound senior forward had led the Patriots to a 17-2 record and a berth in the Class 4A state tournament's second round at the time of his selection. Bottari scored 28 goals and passed for 14 assists through 19 games. A member of the U.S. Youth Soccer Region III Olympic Development Program team, Bottari was a Class A First Team All-State selection at St. Joseph's High in 2012 but did not play high school soccer as a sophomore or junior. He is ranked as the nation's No. 34 recruit in the Class of 2015 by TopDrawerSoccer.com.

Bottari has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally with Habitat for Humanity and Meals on Wheels.

"Michele Bottari is the best player I have ever coached against," said Damon Dixon, head coach of Wade Hampton High. "He is a true striker. He can make something out of nothing. He scored three against us and we threw the kitchen sink at him."

Bottari has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at Clemson 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.

Bottari joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Boys Soccer Players of the Year Tyler Rider (2013-14, J.L. Mann Academy), Koty Millard (2012-13, Cardinal Newman High School), Nestor Jaramillo (2011-12, Cardinal Newman High School), Robert Beebe (2010-11, Pinewood Preparatory School), Emmett Lunceford (2009-10, Irmo High School), and Enzo Martinez (2008-09, 2007-08 & 2006-07, Northwestern High School) 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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