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**GLENBARD WEST HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® ILLINOIS FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 3, 2015) — In its 31st year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Sam Brodner of Glenbard West High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Illinois Football Player of the Year. Brodner is the second Gatorade Illinois Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Glenbard West 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 Brodner as Illinois's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Brodner 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, 215-pound senior running back led the Hitters to a 14-0 record and the Class 7A state championship this past season. A returning First Team All-State selection as named by the Chicago Tribune, Brodner rushed for 1,959 yards and 40 touchdowns on 298 carries in 14 games. He also hauled in 31 receptions for 402 yards and seven scores in addition to returning two kickoffs for touchdowns. In the 34-28, title-clinching win over Libertyville, Brodner rushed for 264 yards and four touchdowns on 28 carries, setting the Class 7A final rushing yards record and capturing championship game MVP honors.

Brodner has maintained a 4.48 weighted GPA on a 5.0 scale in the classroom. In addition to donating his time as a youth football instructor, he has volunteered on behalf of his church, his school's Best Buddies peer-mentoring initiative and the DuPage Pads homeless shelter.

"He single-handedly beat us. He really is a complete player," said Dan Hartman, head coach at rival Hinsdale Central. "He can run between the tackles, he can run outside with speed that is uncanny for a player of his size, he can return kickoffs, he catches passes, he can kick, and he could've played defense if they asked. On film, I usually find at least three plays in which I ask myself, 'How did he just do that?'"

Brodner has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at Vanderbilt University in the fall of 2016.

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.

Brodner joins recent Gatorade Illinois Football Players of the Year Gabe Green (2014-15, Sacred Heart-Griffin High School), Justin Jackson (2013-14 & 2012-13, Glenbard North High School), Blake Winkler (2011-12, Lincoln-Way East High School), Reilly O'Toole (2010-11, Wheaton Warrenville South High School), Christian Lombard (2009-10, William Fremd High School), Chris Watt (2008-09, Glenbard West High School) and Steve Filer (2007-08, Mount Carmel 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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