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**FORT OSAGE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MISSOURI 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 Skylar Thompson of Fort Osage High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Missouri Football Player of the Year. Thompson is the first Gatorade Missouri Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Fort Osage 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 Thompson as Missouri's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Thompson 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 6-foot-3, 195-pound senior quarterback led the Indians (13-1) to the Class 5 state championship this past season. In the 63-28, title-clinching win over Chaminade, Thompson completed 13-of-15 passes for 253 yards and four touchdowns in addition to rushing for 202 yards and three scores on 22 carries, setting a state championship game record with 455 yards of total offense. A returning Class 5 First Team All-State selection as named by the Missouri Football Coaches Association, Thompson threw for 2,112 yards and 25 touchdowns against just three interceptions on 138-of-204 passing (67.7 percent) in 14 games. The national Elite 11 quarterback camp participant also rushed for 1,092 yards and 19 touchdowns on 188 carries.

Also a basketball standout, Thompson has maintained a 3.48 weighted GPA in the classroom and served as a member of the National Honor Society. He has volunteered on behalf of the Special Olympics and as part of an adopt-a-family program during the holidays.

"For four years Skylar has been a model of consistency and hard work for Fort Osage's football program," said Leon Douglas, head coach at rival North Kansas City. "He has tremendous talent, yet he's down to earth and approachable. In my opinion, he's been the best football player in the area for the last two years."

Thompson has verbally committed to play football on scholarship at Kansas State 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.

Thompson joins recent Gatorade Missouri Football Players of the Year T.J. Green (2014-15, Rockhurst High School), Dalvin Warmack (2013-14 & 2012-13, Blue Springs High School), Dorial Green-Beckham (2011-12 & 2010-11, Hillcrest High School), Darrian Miller (2009-10, Blue Springs High School), T.J. Moe (2008-09, Fort Zumwalt West High School) and Nathan Scheelhaase (2007-08, Rockhurst 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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