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**BELLEVUE WEST HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® NEBRASKA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (December 3, 2015) — In its 31<sup>st</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced **Jadyn Kowalski of Bellevue West High School** as its **2015-16 Gatorade Nebraska Football Player of the Year**. Kowalski is the third Gatorade Nebraska Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Bellevue 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 Kowalski as Nebraska's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Kowalski 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-4, 210-pound senior quarterback threw for 3,146 yards and 46 touchdowns against just five interceptions on 174-of-258 passing (67.8 percent) this past season, leading the Thunderbirds (11-1) to the Class A state semifinals. A returning Class A First Team All-State selection as named by the Omaha World-Herald and Lincoln Journal Star, Kowalski set state single-season passing records for yards and touchdowns. He also rushed for 199 yards and nine touchdowns on 45 carries in his final prep campaign.

A basketball standout as well, Kowalski has maintained a 4.44 GPA on a 5.0 scale in the classroom. A member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and his church's youth group, he has volunteered for the Open Door Mission, Kids Against Hunger and the Bellevue Food Pantry. He has also donated his time locally at a retirement home and as part of several service projects to benefit his school's athletic department.

"Athletically, you'll be hard-pressed to find a more accomplished football player," said Anthony Dunn, head coach at rival Bellevue East. "He threw for 3,146 yards, 46 touchdowns to only five interceptions and completed 68 percent of his passes. Those numbers haven't been matched in the history of Class A football as a whole. He did all of this while playing probably only three quarters a game throughout the season."

Kowalski remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

Kowalski joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Football Players of the Year C.J. Johnson (2014-15, Bellevue West High School), Harrison Phillips (2013-14, Millard West High School), Isaac Aakre (2012-13, Millard North High School), Drew Ott (2011-12, Giltner High School), Tyson Broekemeier (2010-11, Aurora High School), Bronson Marsh (2009-10, Millard South High School), Tyrone Sellers (2008-09, McCook High School) and Baker Steinkuhler (2007-08, Lincoln Southwest 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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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