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**WHITE STATION HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® TENNESSEE 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 Dillon Mitchell of White Station High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Tennessee Football Player of the Year. Mitchell is the first Gatorade Tennessee Football Player of the Year to be chosen from White Station 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 Mitchell as Tennessee's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Mitchell 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-2, 195-pound senior wide receiver caught 81 passes for 1,484 yards and 22 touchdowns this past season, leading the Spartans to a 9-4 record and the Class 6A quarterfinals. Mitchell also rushed for 951 yards and 20 touchdowns on 64 carries. A First Team All-State selection and district Offensive Player of the Year as a junior, he also earned the 2015 Tennessee Titans Mr. Football Class 6A Back of the Year award.

Mitchell has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom as an upperclassman. He has volunteered locally on behalf of food donation drives and a youth football program.

"Mitchell is an off-the-chart talent," said Jeff McFerran, head coach at Bartlett High. "He's the most explosive player I've ever seen in person at the high school level. He changes everything in all phases of the game when he is on the field."

Taking advantage of NCAA early signing rules, Mitchell inked a financial-aid agreement that paves the way for him to enroll at the University of Oregon. He is expected to graduate from high school this month and begin classes in the spring semester.

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.

Mitchell joins recent Gatorade Tennessee Football Players of the Year Ke'Shawn Vaughn (2014-15, Pearl-Cohn High School), Todd Kelly Jr. (2013-14, Webb School of Knoxville), Mark Dodson (2012-13, Whitehaven High School), Patton Robinette (2011-12, Maryville High School), l'Tavius Mathers (2010-11, Blackman High School), JaRon Toney (2009-10, Alcoa High School), Marsalis Teague (2008-09, Henry County High School) and Curt Phillips (2007-08, Sullivan South 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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