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LAKE STEVENS HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED GATORADE® WASHINGTON 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 Jacob Eason of Lake Stevens High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Washington Football Player of the Year. Eason is the first Gatorade Washington Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Lake Stevens 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 Eason as Washington's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Eason 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-6, 220-pound senior quarterback completed 235-of-338 passes for 3,585 yards and 43 touchdowns against just six interceptions this past season, leading the Vikings (12-1) to the Class 4A semifinals. A national Elite 11 quarterback camp invitee and ranked as the nation's No. 16 recruit in the ESPN 300, Eason has been selected to play in the 2016 U.S. Army All-American Bowl.

Eason has maintained a 3.83 GPA in the classroom. An active member of his Holy Cross Catholic Church community, he has volunteered with the Never Ever Give Up foundation, helping to ensure children fighting cancer get the support and resources they need, in addition to visiting with patients. He has also donated his time as the coordinator and head coach for quarterbacks at the Vikings Junior Football Camp and as a four-year instructor at the Vikings Passing Academy.

"Eason has the fastest release I have ever seen," said Kai Smalley, head coach at Snohomish High. "It is actually very deceiving if you aren't watching him for a long time. He makes such quick and correct reads, then has the ability to get rid of the ball with great mechanics. For being as long as he is, you would think he would have a long release but it happens so quickly, it's nearly impossible for a high school defensive back to get a break on the ball."

Taking advantage of NCAA early signing rules, Eason inked a financial-aid agreement that paves the way for him to enroll at the University of Georgia. He is expected to graduate from high school this month and begin classes in the spring semester, however, major media outlets and social media have reported that Eason is visiting the University of Florida this week. According to Lake Stevens High head coach Tom Tri, Eason is exploring his options in the wake of Mark Richt's mutual decision with UGA Director of Athletics Greg McGarity to step down as head coach. Eason has until early January to make his enrollment at Georgia official or not.

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.

Eason joins recent Gatorade Washington Football Players of the Year Austin Joyner (2014-15, Marysville-Pilchuck High School), Reilly Hennessey (2013-14, Camas High School), Max Browne (2012-13 & 2011-12, Skyline High School), Kasen Williams (2010-11, Skyline High School), Jake Heaps (2009-10 & 2008-09, Skyline High School) and Tony Heard (2007-08, Edmonds-Woodway 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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