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**LEWISTON HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MAINE BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 11, 2016) — In its 31th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Abdi Shariff-Hassan of Lewiston High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Maine Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Shariff-Hassan is the first Gatorade Maine Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Lewiston 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 Shariff-Hassan as Maine's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Shariff-Hassan joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, East Brunswick HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-8, 138-pound senior forward and midfielder scored 26 goals and passed for 14 assists this past season, leading the Blue Devils (18-0) to the Class A state championship. An All-American selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America, Shariff-Hassan was also named Player of the Year by the Maine Sunday Telegram and the Maine Soccer Coaches Association.

Shariff-Hassan has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of youth soccer programs and his school's Unified Sports Basketball Team in association with the Maine Principals Association and the Special Olympics.

"He's incredibly quick, with a wonderful touch on the ball, and he's a tremendous finisher in front of the goal," said Matt Andreasen, head coach at Edward Little High. "He was the heart and soul of their state championship team."

Shariff-Hassan 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.

Shariff-Hassan joins recent Gatorade Maine Boys Soccer Players of the Year Stephen Ochan (2014-15, Deering High School), Wyatt Omsberg (2013-14, Scarborough High School), Matt Saunders (2012-13, Lawrence High School), Robby Lentine (2011-12, Windham High School), Fazal Nabi (2010-11, Portland High School), Gabe Hoffman-Johnson, (2009-10 & 2008-09, Falmouth High School), Oliver Blum (2007-08, Greely High School), and Jordan Hale (2006-07, Falmouth 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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