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**JOHNSON HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® ALABAMA BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 17, 2016) — 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 John Petty of Johnson High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Alabama Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Petty is the first Gatorade Alabama Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Johnson 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 court, distinguishes Petty as Alabama's best high school boys basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Basketball Player of the Year award to be announced in March, Petty joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Dwight Howard (2003-04, SW Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.), Chauncey Billups (1993-94 & 1994-95, George Washington HS, Colo.), Jason Kidd (1991-92, St. Joseph Notre Dame HS, Calif.), Paul Pierce (1994-95, Inglewood HS, Calif.) and Chris Bosh (2001-02, Lincoln HS, Texas).

The 6-foot-7, 190-pound junior wing led the Jaguars (29-5) to a second consecutive Class 5A state championship this season. Petty amassed 34 points, seven rebounds, three assists, three blocks and two steals in the 71-50, title-clinching win over Faith Academy, capturing a second straight tournament MVP honor. The Alabama Sports Writers Association's returning Class 5A Player of the Year, he averaged 19.9 points, 7.3 rebounds, 4.1 assists, 1.8 steals and 1.8 blocks per game. He shot 51.0 percent from the field, 30.8 percent from 3-point range and 78.2 percent from the free-throw line.

Petty has maintained a B average in the classroom. In addition to donating his time as a youth basketball instructor and serving as his team's prayer leader, he has volunteered locally as part of a can drive for needy families, as a motivational speaker at area elementary schools and on behalf of his church.

"John will go down as the most exciting player in Alabama history after he graduates next year," said Johnson head coach Jack Doss. "The bigger the moment, the better he plays."

Petty will begin his senior year of high school this fall.

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.

Petty joins recent Gatorade Alabama Boys Basketball Players of the Year Josh Langford (2014-15 & 2012-13, Madison Academy), William Lee (2013-14, Dallas County High School), Craig Sword (2011-12, Carver High School), Levi Randolph (2010-11, Bob Jones High School), KT Harrell (2009-10, Brewbaker Technology Magnet High School), Jordan Swing (2008-09, Vestavia Hills High School), JaMychal Green (2007-08, St. Jude Educational Institute), and Justin Knox (2006-07, Tuscaloosa Central 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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