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**COEUR D'ALENE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE IDAHO FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 12, 2016) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Colson Yankoff of Coeur d'Alene High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Idaho Football Player of the Year. Yankoff is the first Gatorade Idaho Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Coeur d'Alene 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 Yankoff as Idaho's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award to be announced in December, Collins joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Anquan Boldin (1998-99, Pahokee HS, Fla.), Greg Olsen (2002-03, Wayne Hills HS, N.J.), Matthew Stafford (2005-06 Highland Park HS, Texas), Harrison Smith (2006-07 Knoxville Catholic High School, Tenn.), Latavius Murray (2007-08, Onondaga HS, N.Y.), Brock Osweiler (2008-09, Flathead High School, Mont.) and Leonard Fournette (2012-13, 2014-15, St. Augustine HS, La.)

The 6-foot-4, 200-pound junior quarterback passed for 3,129 yards and 27 touchdowns this past season, leading the Vikings to a 6-4 record and the Class 5A quarterfinals. Yankoff completed 271 of 400 passes and was intercepted just six times. He also rushed for 968 yards and 26 touchdowns on 112 carries. Yankoff was selected the Inland Empire League's Class 5A Offensive MVP.

Yankoff has maintained a 3.96 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally as a peer mentor in his school.

"Colson Yankoff was the best quarterback we saw all year," said Camas (Wash.) High coach Jon Eagle. "He's accurate, with a strong arm. He extends plays, he has great pocket presence, he can run, and he really competes."

Yankoff will begin his senior year of high school next 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 Player of the Year Selection Committee, 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.

Yankoff joins recent Gatorade Idaho Football Players of the Year Trey Bell (2015-16, Mountain View High School), Tristen Hoge (2014-15 & 2013-14, Highland High School), Joe Martarano (2012-13, Fruitland High School), Chad Chalich (2011-12, Coeur d'Alene High School), Cody McCarthy (2010-11, Bishop Kelly High School), and Taylor Kelly (2009-10, Eagle High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Yankoff will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow the conversation on Twitter #GatoradePOY. 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.