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**CENTER GROVE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE INDIANA 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 Russ Yeast of Center Grove High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Indiana Football Player of the Year. Yeast is the second Gatorade Indiana Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Center Grove 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 Yeast as Indiana'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, 185-pound senior running back and defensive back rushed for 1,525 yards and 19 touchdowns this past season, leading the Trojans (12-2) to the Class 6A state championship game. A transfer from Fremont Ross High in Ohio, Yeast scored 12 touchdowns in five postseason games. He also caught 32 passes for 602 yards and eight scores this fall, and on defense he contributed 25 tackles and broke up 11 passes.

Yeast has maintained a 3.32 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally with an elementary school literacy-outreach program and at a camp for children with disabilities. He has also donated his time as a youth football coach.

"Russ Yeast is dynamic and plays multiple positions," said Pat Mallory, head coach of Lawrence North High. "He is dangerous and has a big impact. He is the most versatile player I've seen in a long time."

Yeast has verbally committed to play football on an athletic scholarship at the University of Louisville in the fall of 2017.

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.

Yeast joins recent Gatorade Indiana Football Players of the Year Brandon Peters (2015-16, Avon High School), Markell Jones (2014-15, Columbus East High School), Sammy Mireles (2013-14, Elwood Community High School), Sam Schrader (2012-13, Mishawaka High School), Gunner Kiel (2011-12, Columbus East High School), Matt McIntosh (2010-11, F.J. Reitz High School), and Kofi Hughes (2009-10, Cathedral High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Yeast 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.