

Contact: John Manzo (312-729-3656)

**KICKAPOO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® MISSOURI BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 20, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Jared Ridder of Kickapoo High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Missouri Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Ridder is the second Gatorade Missouri Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Kickapoo 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 Ridder as Missouri'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, Ridder joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Karl-Anthony Towns (2012-13 & 2013-14, St. Joseph HS, N.J.), Dwight Howard (2003-04, SW Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.), Chris Bosh (2001-02, Lincoln HS, Texas), Paul Pierce (1994-95, Inglewood HS, Calif.), Chauncey Billups (1993-94 & 1994-95, George Washington HS, Colo.) and Jason Kidd (1991-92, St. Joseph Notre Dame HS, Calif.).

The 6-foot-7, 195-pound senior forward had led the Chiefs to a 25-4 record and a berth in the Class 5 semifinals at the time of his selection. Ridder averaged 24.2 points, 6.8 rebounds and 1.8 assists per game while shooting 57.5 percent from inside the arc. A First Team All-State selection, he is ranked as the state's No. 1 recruit in the Class of 2017 by PrepHoops.com.

A member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and the Spanish Club, Ridder has volunteered locally on behalf of an area homeless shelter and as a youth basketball coach. "Jared Ridder has to be at or near the top of the many talented players we have produced at our school," said Kickapoo High head coach Richard Rippee. "He is well-known for his shooting ability but sometimes his other skills go unnoticed. He has a very high basketball IQ and I believe he is top player in the state of Missouri this season."

Ridder has maintained a 3.57 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at Xavier University 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 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.

Ridder joins recent Gatorade Missouri Boys Basketball Players of the Year Jayson Tatum (2015-16, 2014-15 & 2013-14, Chaminade College Preparatory School), Kyle Wolf (2012-13, Rockhurst High School), Cameron Biedscheid (2011-12, Cardinal Ritter College Preparatory High School), Bradley Beal (2010-11 & 2009-10, Chaminade College Preparatory School), Alec Burks (2008-09, Grandview High School), Kramer Soderberg (2007-08, Saint Charles West High School), and Conner Teahan (2006-07, Rockhurst High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Jared 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 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.