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**GUNTERSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® ALABAMA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 14, 2010) — In its third decade of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Cati Leak of Guntersville High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Alabama Volleyball Player of the Year. Leak is the first Gatorade Alabama Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Guntersville 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 Leak as Alabama's best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award announced in December, Leak joins an elite alumni association of past state volleyball award winners, including USA Volleyball Olympians Kim Glass (2001-02, Horseshoe HS, Penn.), Kim Willoughby (1998-99, 1999-00, Assumption HS, La.) and Ogonna Nnamani (1999-00, University HS, Ill).

The 6-foot-2 junior outside hitter led the Wildcats to a 57-4 record and a second consecutive Class 4A state title this past season. Leak recorded 23 kills, 22 digs, three blocks, three service aces and three assists in the 3-1 Class 4A state championship victory against Brooks, earning state tournament Most Valuable Player recognition for a second straight year. A returning Class 4A First Team All-State selection as named by the Alabama Volleyball Coaches Association and The *Birmingham News*, she amassed 580 kills, 449 digs, 85 assists, 67 service aces and 51 blocks while posting a kill percentage of .433 this fall. As a sophomore in 2009, Leak produced 627 kills and 473 digs, leading the Wildcats (61-7) to the Class 4A state championship.

Also a basketball and track standout, Leak has maintained a weighted 3.45 GPA in the classroom. A member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and Future Business Leaders of America, she has volunteered on behalf of the Christmas Coalition and the Soles4Souls footwear charity in addition to serving as a mentor to area youth basketball and volleyball athletes.

"She is something special," said Rose Powell, head coach of Rocket City Volleyball Club. "Being an Olympian myself, I can see her becoming one. She takes her team to the next level, and she's not limited to the outside or the middle—she can do it all. She's the full package. You don't see that much in today's game. You're not going to have to take her off the court."

Leak will begin her 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 ESPN RISE and the Gatorade high school sports leadership team, 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.

Leak joins recent Gatorade Alabama Volleyball Players of the Year Chelsea Wintzinger (2009-10, Huntsville), Catherine Rebarchak (2008-09, St. Paul's Episcopal School) and MacKenzie Wilson (2007-08, Grissom) 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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com.

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