

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Julie Mason (412-561-1014)

**WALTON HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® GEORGIA 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 Kelly Murphy of Walton High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Georgia Volleyball Player of the Year. Murphy is the second Gatorade Georgia Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Walton 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 Murphy as Georgia's best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award announced in December, Murphy 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 junior outside hitter led the Raiders to a 42-7 record and a second consecutive Class AAAAA state title this past season. Murphy recorded 28 kills and 10 digs in a 3-1 Class AAAAA state championship victory against Northview. The Class AAAAA Player of the Year as named by the Georgia Volleyball Coaches Association, she averaged 4.5 kills, 3.4 digs, 0.7 service aces and 0.2 blocks per game while posting a hitting percentage of .436 this fall. A returning Class AAAAA First Team All-State selection, Murphy produced 613 kills, 179 digs, 61 service aces and 55 blocks as a junior, leading the Raiders (44-6) to the state championship. Her 613 kills in 2009 rank eighth all-time for a single season in state history.

Murphy has maintained a 4.00 GPA in the classroom. In addition to donating her time as youth volleyball instructor, she has volunteered as part of multiple community-service initiatives on behalf of her church and the Young Life Christian ministry.

"Her work ethic is off the charts, and she was something to watch during sets two and three at the finals this year," said Walton Head Coach Suzanne Fitzgerald. "She called her team to battle. I cannot say enough about how this girl continues to grow and develop as a player. Her serve-receive numbers improved, her defense was comparable to our libero and her attacking numbers speak for themselves. She is an incredible talent."

Murphy 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.

Murphy joins recent Gatorade Georgia Volleyball Players of the Year Mary Hoey (2009-10, Pope), Monique Mead (2008-09, Landmark Christian) and Betsy Smith (2007-08, Wesleyan 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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com.

###