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**Contact: Julie Mason (412-561-1014)**

**HELENA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® MONTANA 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 Monica Grimsrud of Helena High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Montana Volleyball Player of the Year. Grimsrud is the second Gatorade Montana Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Helena 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 Grimsrud as Montana's best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award announced in December, Grimsrud 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-1 senior middle blocker led the Bengals to a 23-3 record and the Class AA state title this past season. Grimsrud totaled 17 kills and three aces in a 3-0 Class AA state championship victory against Billings West. A Class AA First Team All-State selection, she recorded 605 kills, 312 digs, 131 blocks, 67 service aces and 20 assists while posting a kill percentage of .412 this fall. Also an East-West All-Star Game selection, Grimsrud set single-match and single-season school records for kills as well as the single-season mark for blocks.

Grimsrud has maintained a 3.53 GPA in the classroom. In addition to donating her time as a youth basketball and volleyball official, she has volunteered on behalf of her church, her school's anti-bullying organization and Montana Teens Against Drugs.

"Grimsrud sealed the deal for them," said Jeff Carroll, head coach of rival Billings West High. "She had a couple 30-plus kill matches. Her offensive ability and her ability to hit from anywhere, including the back row, separates her. They counted on her match in and match out to shoulder the load. She was driven to win a state championship. She was amazing."

Grimsrud has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at Montana State University beginning in the fall of 2011.

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.

Grimsrud joins recent Gatorade Montana Volleyball Players of the Year Kelsey Williams (2009-10, Helena), Emily Carroll (2008-09, Billings Senior) and Ashley Welborn (2007-08, Billings Senior) 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com).

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