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**ROCK HILL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® SOUTH CAROLINA 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 Karis Watson of Rock Hill High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade South Carolina Volleyball Player of the Year. Watson is the first Gatorade South Carolina Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Rock Hill 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 Watson as South Carolina's best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award announced in December, Watson 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 senior middle hitter recorded 355 kills and 130 blocks this past season while posting a kill percentage of .569 and leading the Trojans (38-2) to the Class 4A state final. The Class 4A Player of the Year, Watson is also a two-time All-State selection and was named a 2010-11 Under Armour Honorable Mention All-American.

Watson has maintained a weighted 4.51 GPA in the classroom. President of the area chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, she has volunteered locally on behalf of Operation Christmas Child and Cheer for Children, which benefits underprivileged children in the community.

"She's very big and she's a tremendous influence at the net," said Paula Kirkland, head coach of rival Dorman High. "Defensively, she's a great blocker, and when she's on, she's a dominant player who you just can't stop."

Watson has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at Clemson 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.

Watson joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Volleyball Players of the Year Kellie Schmidt (2009-10, Lexington), Christina Glover (2008-09, Wando) and Ashley Marshall (2007-08, Hillcrest) 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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