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**WETUMPKA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® ALABAMA FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 2, 2010) — In its third decade of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Jamal Golden of Wetumpka High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Alabama Football Player of the Year. Golden is the first Gatorade Alabama Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Wetumpka 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 field, distinguishes Golden as Alabama's best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Golden joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Wes Welker (1999-00, Heritage Hall HS, Okla.), Terrell Suggs (1999-00, Hamilton HS, Ariz.), Anquan Boldin (1998-99, Pahokee HS, Fla.) and Jerome Bettis (1989-90, Mackenzie HS, Mich.).

The 6-foot, 180-pound senior quarterback led the Indians to a 10-2 record and the Class 6A state quarterfinals this past season. Golden passed for 2,343 yards and 23 touchdowns, completing 135-of-231 attempts and throwing 12 interceptions. He also rushed for 1,134 yards and 14 touchdowns on 177 carries. Golden was the Alabama Sports Writers Association Player of the Week after producing 489 yards of total offense and five touchdowns in a 41-27 win over Smiths Station High in the opening round of the playoffs.

Golden has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom. A member of his local Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter, he has volunteered locally as a youth mentor and as part of multiple community service initiatives in association with his church youth group.

"His athleticism is just unbelievable," said Jamey DuBose, head coach of rival Prattville High. "He's a tremendous runner, a very physical kid. You can't get good hits on him. He turns games around with his legs, but what people don't realize is what a great arm he has and what a great thrower he is. This kid has a lot of upside to him."

Golden remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

Golden joins recent Gatorade Alabama Football Players of the Year Coty Blanchard (2009-10, Cherokee County), Clint Moseley (2008-09, Leroy) and Julio Jones (2007-08, Foley) 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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