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**ALEDO HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® TEXAS 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 Johnathan Gray of Aledo High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Texas Football Player of the Year. Gray is the first Gatorade Texas Football Player of the Year to be chosen from Aledo 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 Gray as Texas' best high school football player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Football Player of the Year award announced in December, Gray 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 5-foot-10, 185-pound junior running back led the Bearcats to a 13-0 record entering the Class 4A, Division II state quarterfinals, against Stephenville scheduled for Dec. 3. At the time of his selection, Gray had rushed for 2,682 yards and 49 touchdowns on 263 carries. The 2009 National Sophomore of the Year as named by ESPN RISE and MaxPreps, he had also hauled in 13 receptions for 215 yards and a touchdown. The returning Class 4A Co-Offensive Player of the Year, Gray rushed for 2,670 yards and 45 touchdowns as a sophomore, leading Aledo to the Class 4A, Division II state championship. He recorded 29 receptions for 457 yards and eight touchdowns in 2009.

Gray has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom as an upperclassman. He has volunteered extensively on behalf of his church.

"It's extremely tough to stop him," said Jim Skinner, head coach of rival Birdville High. "He's very talented. He's probably the most talented running back I've coached against in my entire career, and I've coached against some good ones. He's got tremendous balance and tremendous speed. He understands his blocking schemes. He's just an outstanding football player. Look at his stats. The kid's done some unbelievable things, and he's only playing half the game sometimes."

Gray will begin his 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.

Gray joins recent Gatorade Texas Football Players of the Year Scotty Young (2009-10, Billy Ryan), Garrett Gilbert (2008-09, Lake Travis) and Riley Dodge (2007-08, Southlake Carroll) 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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