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**WHITMAN-HANSON REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE MASSACHUSETTS GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 11, 2010) — In its 25<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Samantha Mewis of Whitman-Hanson Regional High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Mewis is the first Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Whitman-Hanson Regional 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 Mewis as Massachusetts' best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Mewis joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Kevin Garnett (1992-93, Maudlin HS, S.C.), Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, East Brunswick HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-11 junior midfielder recorded 32 goals and 12 assists this past season, leading the Panthers (18-2-3) to the Division 1 state semifinals. The *Boston Globe* Division 1 Player of the Year and an ESPN RISE First Team All-American selection, Mewis was one of four high-school players named to the U.S. Soccer Federation Under-20 Women's National Team that qualified for this summer's Under-20 World Cup in Guatemala. An All-American honoree by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America for both her high school and club play, Mewis missed the 2008 high school season to play for Team USA in the Under-17 World Cup in New Zealand.

Mewis has maintained a 3.45 GPA in the classroom. She served in her school's student government in addition to volunteering locally as a youth soccer instructor and as part of hurricane relief efforts following Hurricane Katrina.

"Sam Mewis is a freak. She's 5-11, she's fast, she's like a gazelle," said Keith Caldwell, Mewis's club coach with the Scorpions Soccer Club. "She can do everything. We have one of the best teams in the country, and she's the most athletic, the best tackler, the best dribbler, the best striker, she's just outstanding. She can play center back, center forward, center mid, she can play anywhere."

Mewis has verbally committed to play soccer on scholarship at UCLA 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.

Mewis joins recent Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Soccer Players of the Year Danielle Dakin (2008-09, Minnechaug Regional), Hayley Brock (2007-08, Acton-Boxborough Regional), and Amy Caldwell (2006-07, Braintree) 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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