

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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

**ST. URSULA ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE OHIO 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 Elizabeth Burchenal of St. Ursula Academy as its 2009-10 Gatorade Ohio Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Burchenal is the second Gatorade Ohio Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Ursula Academy.

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 Burchenal as Ohio's 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, Burchenal 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-8 senior forward recorded 37 goals and 14 assists this past season, leading the Bulldogs (18-2) to the Division I regional semifinals. Also the 2008-09 Gatorade Girls Soccer Player of the Year in Ohio, Burchenal was one of 11 girls in 2009 named to both the High School and Youth All-American teams of the National Soccer Coaches Association of America. A two-time ESPN RISE First Team All-American selection, Burchenal concluded her high school career with 102 goals and 40 assists.

Burchenal has maintained a B average in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of the mentally handicapped, at a food bank and as a youth soccer coach.

"Elizabeth Burchenal is a very, very special goal-scorer, which you don't find a great deal of," said Mike Tucker, head coach at the University of Dayton. "Great goal-scorers are hard to find. She's probably the best forward I've seen around here in many years. When she gets an opportunity she's going to put it away. She's the kind of kid when she gets the ball in the final third, it's 'Uh-oh, here comes a goal.' You don't often find that."

Burchenal has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at the University of North Carolina this 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.

Burchenal joins recent Gatorade Ohio Girls Soccer Players of the Year Tahnai Annis (2007-08, Pickerington North) and Rose Augustin (2006-07, Walsh Jesuit) 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).

###