

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Julie Mason (412-561-1014)

**SACRED HEART PREP STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE CALIFORNIA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 13, 2010) — In its 25th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Abby Dahlkemper of Sacred Heart Prep as its 2009-10 Gatorade California Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Dahlkemper is the first Gatorade California Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Sacred Heart Prep..

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 Dahlkemper as California'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, Dahlkemper 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-6 junior midfielder led the Gators (14-5-3) to the California Interscholastic Federation Central Coast Section Division III semifinals this past season, recording 16 goals and eight assists. A two-time West Bay Athletic League Most Valuable Player, Dahlkemper is a member of the U.S. Soccer Federation Under-17 Women's National Team and is the nation's No. 20 recruit in the Class of 2011 as rated by TopDrawerSoccer.com.

Dahlkemper has maintained a 3.05 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally improving the grounds and facilities at area elementary schools and organizing a charity soccer tournament to provide shoes to children in Africa.

"Abby Dahlkemper is just a big, strong body," said Erin Montoya, Dahlkemper's coach with the MVL A Avalanche club program. "A lot of times you think players built like her are a little slow or not technical. She has it all: speed, finesse, skill. She's a stud. Everything you can ask, she can do."

Dahlkemper will begin her senior year of high school 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.

Dahlkemper joins recent Gatorade California Girls Soccer Players of the Year Lauren Matheson (2008-09, Mission Viejo), Teresa Noyola (2007-08, Palo Alto), and Lauren Barnes (2006-07, Upland) 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.

###