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**MILLARD WEST HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE NEBRASKA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 13, 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 Katie Pickinpaugh of Millard West High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Nebraska Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Pickinpaugh is the second Gatorade Nebraska Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Millard West 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 Pickinpaugh as Nebraska'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, Pickinpaugh 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 had led the Wildcats (14-1) to the top seed in the Class A state tournament and had recorded 17 goals and five assists at the time of her selection entering the May 12 postseason quarterfinals. A two-time Omaha World Herald First Team All-State selection, Pickinpaugh entered the 2010 postseason having scored a goal in seven consecutive postseason games for Millard West dating back to 2008, including a goal in the Wildcats' 3-0 win over Millard North in the 2009 Class A state final. She had recorded 88 goals and 29 assists in her prep career through 15 games this season.

Pickinpaugh has maintained a 3.37 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach and instructor.

"Katie Pickinpaugh has good size, strength and speed," said Doug Trenerry, an assistant coach with Millard West High. "She seems to have always played her better games against the better teams. She can score and she scores in the tough games. If I have to have someone to lean on when times are tough, she's the one to do it."

Pickinpaugh has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Nebraska-Omaha 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.

Pickinpaugh joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Girls Soccer Players of the Year Allie Adam (2008-09, Millard West High School), Molly Thomas (2007-08, Millard North), and Molly Thomas (2006-07, Millard North) 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).