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**HILLCREST HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE SOUTH CAROLINA 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 Stephanie DeVita of Hillcrest High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade South Carolina Girls Soccer Player of the Year. DeVita is the first Gatorade South Carolina Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Hillcrest 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 DeVita as South Carolina'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, DeVita 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-7 sophomore midfielder led the Rams (11-10-1) to the Class 4A state tournament this season, recording 22 goals and five assists. A 2009 Region II-4A First Team selection, DeVita suited up for a Hillcrest program in 2009 that had won a total of six games and scored 31 goals in three years. DeVita has now scored 40 goals in two seasons for the Rams, helping the program qualify for the state postseason for the first time since 2004 this spring and produce its first winning record in eight years.

DeVita has maintained a 3.62 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach.

"Stephanie DeVita is athletic, good on the ball and scores goals—she's the best female player in our state in terms of scoring goals with her head," said Andrew Hyslop, Co-Director of the Carolina Elite Soccer Academy club program. "For her club team, she's consistently our best player and we have the best team in the state. The kid can do it against the best players in the country."

DeVita will begin her junior 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.

DeVita joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Girls Soccer Players of the Year Sarah Schaidle (2008-09, Mauldin) and Kira Campbell (2007-08 & 2006-07, Lexington) 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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