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**NEUQUA VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® ILLINOIS BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 18, 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 Bryan Ciesiulka of Neuqua Valley High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Illinois Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Ciesiulka is the first Gatorade Illinois Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Neuqua Valley 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 Ciesiulka as Illinois' best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Ciesiulka joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Kevin Garnett (1992-93, Maudlin HS, S.C.), Tony Meola (1986-87, Kearney HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-5 senior midfielder recorded 16 goals and 22 assists this past season, leading the Wildcats (28-1) to the Class 3A state quarterfinals. An All-American selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America and the Illinois High School Soccer Coaches Association's Player of the Year, Ciesiulka was a First Team All-State honoree by both the *Chicago Tribune* and *Chicago Sun-Times*. He concluded his high school career with 40 goals and 48 assists.

Ciesiulka has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. An active member of his church community, he has volunteered at local charity golf events. Ciesiulka also completed a service-mission to Mexico, where he worked in an orphanage.

"Bryan Ciesiulka is one of the most dynamic kids that I've seen in awhile," said Mike Wiggins, head coach of rival Hinsdale Central High. "He is something else. He's quick and he's sharp and he's technical and he's active and he's around the ball and he takes guys on. He finds ways to get on the end of balls. The best way I can describe him is: energy and active."

Ciesiulka has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Marquette University 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.

Ciesiulka joins recent Gatorade Illinois Boys Soccer Players of the Year Tim Zimmer (2008-09, Naperville Central), John Shakon (2007-08, Hinsdale Central), and Anthony Colaizzi (2006-07, Warren Township) 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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