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**LAS VEGAS HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® NEVADA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 18, 2010) — In its 25th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Joaquin Rivas of Las Vegas High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Nevada Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Rivas is the first Gatorade Nevada Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Las Vegas 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 Rivas as Nevada's 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, Rivas 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-7 senior midfielder recorded 35 goals and 18 assists this past season, leading the Wildcats (20-4) to their second straight Class 4A state championship. The *Las Vegas Review Journal's* Class 4A Player of the Year and the Northeast League's Player of the Year, Rivas tallied seven goals and two assists in five postseason matches, including the game-winning goal in the final minute of the Wildcats' 1-0 win against Douglas High in the state semifinals.

Rivas has maintained a B average in the classroom. A tutor at a nearby elementary school, he has also volunteered with HELP of Southern Nevada, a program to benefit area homeless, and has participated in local fundraising events to benefit sick children and families in need.

"Joaquin Rivas is one of the best forwards to come out of this city," said Jason DiOrio, Rivas's coach with the Las Vegas Premier club team. "He is unstoppable when he is on. If he gets an inch, goodbye, it's in the back of the net."

Rivas has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas 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.

Rivas joins recent Gatorade Nevada Boys Soccer Players of the Year Kevin Rogge (2008-09, Centennial), Steven Avena (2007-08, Bishop Gorman), and Zac Zaher (2006-07, Bishop Gorman) 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.

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