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**UNION HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® OKLAHOMA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 6, 2010) — In its 25th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Omar Mata of Union High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Oklahoma Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Mata is the fourth Gatorade Oklahoma Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Union 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 Mata as Oklahoma'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, Mata 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-9 senior midfielder had recorded 14 goals and 14 assists at the time of his selection, leading the Redskins (10-1) to Friday's Class 6A quarterfinal playoff game with Edmond Santa Fe. A three-time All-District 3 and All-Frontier Valley Conference selection, Mata has been named to this year's All-State Team and will play in Europe this summer for the Disney Soccer Showcase All-Star Team.

Mata has maintained a 3.83 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of youth soccer programs and camps.

"Mata is fast and smart and very good technically," said Seth Condley, head coach of rival Stillwater High. "He can change a game in an instant with one touch of the ball."

Mata has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Tulsa 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.

Mata joins recent Gatorade Oklahoma Boys Soccer Players of the Year Jack Coleman (2008-09, Norman North), Thomas Shannon (2007-08, Broken Arrow Senior), and Jonathan Gann (2006-07, Union) 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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