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**GRANITE CITY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® ILLINOIS BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 2, 2010) — In its 25th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Jake DePew of Granite City High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Illinois Baseball Player of the Year. DePew is the first Gatorade Illinois Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Granite City 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 DePew as Illinois' best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year award announced in June, DePew joins an elite alumni association of past state baseball award winners, including Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Roy Halladay (1994-95, Arvada West HS, Colo.), David Price (2003-04, Blackman HS, Tenn.), Chipper Jones (1989-90, Bolles School, Fla.), Derek Lee (1992-93, El Camino HS, Calif.) and John Lester (2001-02, Bellarmine Prep, Wash.).

The 6-foot, 215-pound senior catcher owned a .480 batting average this season with 12 home runs and 43 RBI at the time of his selection, leading the Warriors (26-9) to the sectional semifinals against O'Fallon, scheduled for June 2. A Louisville Slugger First Team Preseason All-America selection, DePew owns 14 school batting records and was chosen First Team All-State in 2009.

DePew has maintained an unweighted 4.36 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally as a youth baseball coach, on behalf of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America and has served as president of his Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter.

"He's a very good defender with a very good arm, and he's an excellent hitter," said Tim Funkhauser, head coach of rival Edwardsville High. "It's like having a coach out on the field with him—he calls the pitches, he knows his pitchers' strengths and our hitters' weaknesses."

DePew has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Louisville 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.

DePew joins recent Gatorade Illinois Baseball Players of the Year Kevin Koziol (2008-09, Brother Rice), Jake Odorizzi (2007-08, Highland) and Jake Smolinski (2006-07, Boylan Catholic) 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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