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**YORK HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MAINE GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 11, 2010) — In its 25th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Nicole Taylor of York High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Maine Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Taylor is the first Gatorade Maine Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from York 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 court, distinguishes Taylor as Maine's best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award announced in March, Taylor joins an elite alumni association of past state girls basketball award-winners, including Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Diana Taurasi (1998-99 & 1999-00, Don Antonio Lugo HS, Calif.), Maya Moore (2005-06 Collins Hill HS, Ga.), Rashanda McCants (2004-05, Asheville HS, N.C.), Shyra Ely (1999-00, Ben Davis HS, Ind.) and Lisa Leslie (1988-89, Morningside HS, Calif.)

The 6-foot junior center and forward led the Wildcats (23-1) to the Class B state championship this past season, averaging 16.5 points, 9.5 rebounds and 2.8 steals per game. A two-time First Team All-State selection and a three-time team MVP, Taylor scored 16 points and pulled down seven rebounds in the 40-35 title-clinching win over Nokomis High. She also eclipsed the career 1,000-point mark this season, becoming the first player in school history to reach that plateau before her senior year.

Taylor has maintained a 91.3 average in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as an elementary school tutor, a youth basketball coach and for her town's parks and recreation department.

"I've coached basketball for 39 years at many levels, both boys and girls, and Nicole Taylor ranks as one of the best I've ever had," said York High Head Coach Rick Clark. "She wears me out after practice working on her shot and other aspects of her game long after the other players have gone. She is an icon in the community and a role model for the other girls."

Taylor will begin her senior 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.

Taylor joins recent Gatorade Maine Girls Basketball Players of the Year Morgan Frame (2008-09, Waterville), Rachael Mack (2007-08, Cony), and Ashley Cimino (2006-07, McAuley) among the state's list of former award winners.

To celebrate the award's 25th anniversary, Gatorade wants you to vote for the All-Time Greatest Players of the Year at gatorade.com/POY25. 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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